

Groomer To Groomer

"The Grooming Industry's Trade Magazine"

www.groomertogroomer.com

Vol. 27 Ed. 4 June 2008

+ *The Benefits of*
Health
Reimbursement
Arrangements

+ **First Aid**
Basics
for the **Grooming**
Professional

Veronica
Frosch
She's
Smokin'
Hot

The
New
Girl

Sportsmanship

Veronica Frosch
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Cover: Designed by Lucas Colton

Copyright May 2008. Groomer to Groomer is published nine times yearly in Jan; Feb; March; April/May; June; July; August/Sept; Oct; and Nov/Dec by Barkleigh Production, Inc. 970 West Trindle Road, Mechanicsburg PA 17055. Postmaster: Send change of address to Groomer to Groomer c/o Barkleigh Productions, Inc., 970 West Trindle Road, Mechanicsburg PA 17055. Annual U.S. subscription rate \$25. Outside U.S. \$35. year, surface rates. Groomer to Groomer is free to current Barkleigh Productions, Inc. customers. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission of the publisher. Editorial offices: 970 West Trindle Road, Mechanicsburg PA 17055. (717) 691-3388 FAX (717) 691-3381 Email: info@barkleigh.com

Sally's Desk by Sally Liddick



Sally Liddick



Gwen Shelly

Rolling to Washington

Dear Groomers,

Meritus by any other name...

I want to apologize for an article carried in *Groomer to Groomer*, which demeaned the use of the word *Meritus* earned by some elite members of the *International Society of Canine Cosmetologists*, a respected certifying organization under founder and director, Pam Lauritzen.

GTG strives to build up the industry and recognizes the efforts of these groomers to achieve their Meritus recognition through study and hands-on experience. Somehow this got past our editorial safeguards. While the article stated that there is no such word, it is obvious that word stands for a higher level of achievement. And new words go into *Webster's* every year.

Pam and I go back many years over the use of words. We once had a stalemate over the word *Groomer* or *Pet Stylist*. I, the editor of *Groomer to Groomer* magazine, stood by *Groomer*. She, the editor of *Pet Stylist* magazine, insisted on a change in the industry to the word *Pet Stylist*. We both agreed finally that both were acceptable and indeed they are basically used interchangeably in the industry today.

Recently, at *Intergroom*, Pam and I were going over old times. We talked about how we each got into grooming. There wasn't schooling or associations much then. We kind of fell into grooming in the 50's, 60's and 70's.

So again, Meritus Groomers. I apologize. Keep up the good work. *If you would like more information on ISCC, Request Reader Service # 5036.*

Rolling to Washington

"I don't think I want to go to *Pacific Northwest* show," I told Gwen.

Gwen reluctantly went to her phone to cancel my flight to Washington. "You have to go," she stated flatly. "Let's find a way," she volunteered after the call.

Ever since the flight back from *Groom & Kennel Expo* in Burbank, California, I decided I would limit my cross country flights. Flight day is very long and I don't feel good while we are flying. I have always minded altitude. I avoid Denver for that very reason. For years, when we would go to Denver, I would feel so sick. Sick almost to the point of hospitalization. Then I found out I had altitude sickness and many people do actually end up in the hospital.

So, I resigned myself to sending Gwen and the staff, even though I really wanted to go to the *Pacific Northwest*. I love seeing *Mt. Rainer* and the many friends we have in Washington. We had a new venue, too, and I really wanted to see how it would work out.

"How about a cruise?" I said. "We can float around through the *Panama Canal* and come up past Mexico to Washington." I knew it was ridiculous, but I threw it out.

"What about a train," said Gwen.

"A train??? You have got to be kidding," and I dismissed the idea. Driving was out of the question as it would take Gwen and I a month if we allowed for getting lost and back road driving time.

"What about the train," she said. "It would be fun. A new adventure." I began to ponder this ridiculous idea. I got on the net and looked at the itinerary. Lucy, our cruise director, even temporarily reserved a sleeper car.

"The best trip our family ever took!" glowed one endorsement.

"The scenery was amazing!" stated another. "My wife and I are ready to do it again."

The more I read, the more excited I got. With every new discovery on the net, I became more convinced that Gwen was right. It was a

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Veronica
Frosch
She's

SMOKIN' HOT

By
Kathy
Hosler

"Oh, Wow! I can hardly believe it!" exclaims an ecstatic Veronica Frosch as she accepts the gleaming trophy, gorgeous rosette, and impressive check. "This has been my most winning weekend ever!"

Veronica had a phenomenal weekend competing at the 2008 *Groom and Kennel Expo* in Burbank, California, landing in the winner's circle time after time.

Everyone has heard the saying; when you're hot – you're hot. Well, that weekend, Veronica was on fire!

Veronica began her winning weekend by entering – and winning — the *Hanvey Specialty Engineering Poodle Tournament*. She advanced to the *Andis Best In Show*

competition – and she was victorious once again.

Those were amazing accomplishments in themselves, but Veronica was not finished yet. She had also entered the *Nature's Specialties Winner's Circle Tournament*. Could Veronica possibly win this too?

The *Nature's Specialties Winner's Circle Tournament* is a competition unlike any other. There is only one winner. There are no second or third place winners. The contestants prepare for this competition for months knowing that either they will win it all – or they will win nothing.

Additionally, a most amazing bonus in this tournament is the *Triple Crown*

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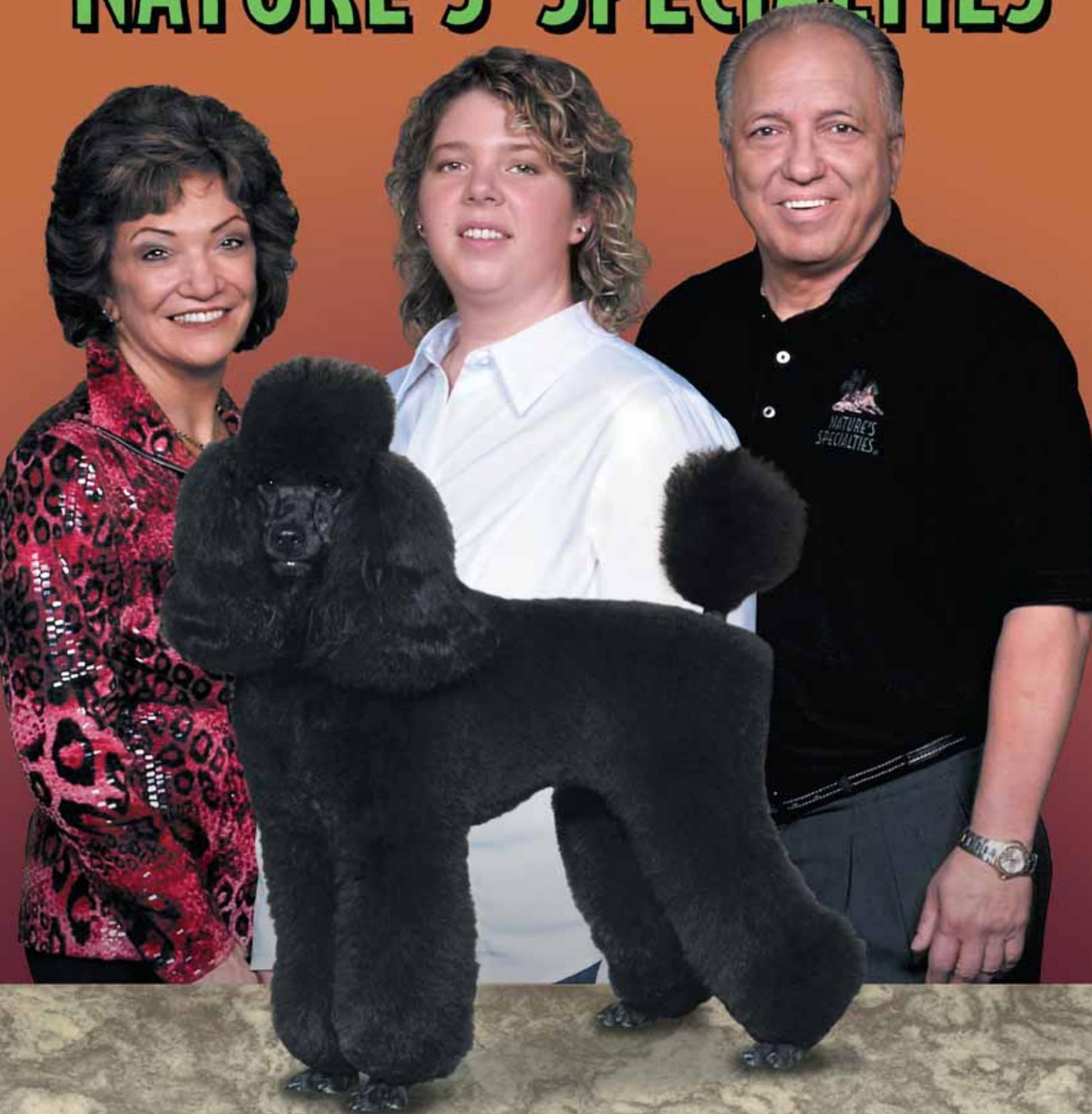
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Nature's Specialties Winner's Circle Tournament Winner Veronica Frosch
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Veronica Frosch
She is Smokin' Hot
Continued from page 6

Jackpot. The first contestant to win the *Winner's Circle Tournament* three times within a round also earns the *Triple Crown Jackpot*. It grows with every competition until someone wins it. Right now it stands at a whopping \$30,000.

"I don't think about that huge

jackpot during the competition," says Veronica. "I am too busy concentrating on putting the best groom I can on my dog.

"*Jack*, the black Miniature Poodle that I competed with, had not been groomed since last November, so I had lots of hair to work with. We entered the ring and I looked around at all the talented groomers we were about to go head to head with."

Veronica knew that these

groomers were the best of the best, and had come from all over the world to compete. Each one of them was capable of producing a groom that would have them standing in the winners circle.

"Midway through the competition, I felt good," said Veronica. "When I finished, I was very happy with the results. I knew that I had done the best groom that I could have done on *Jack*. I was thrilled to make the judges cut and become one of the three finalists."

Ultimately, the *International Judges Association* panel of judges made their decision. The room fell silent as they lifted the spectacular trophy and headed toward the final three dogs. All eyes were on the glistening trophy - and on the anxious finalists who had worked and planned for months for the chance to take this trophy home.

"Suddenly I heard my name and the trophy was in front of me," said a breathless Veronica. "What a rush! It's hard to explain the excitement I felt. Everything is a whirlwind, and my mind goes blank. It doesn't seem real. Then someone is telling me to go get my picture taken for the magazine."

"Being in *Groomer To Groomer* is secretly one of my most favorite parts of winning competitions," whispers Veronica excitedly. "It's awesome!"

"My clients think it's awesome too. They are very supportive and follow my career closely. They love looking at all my trophies and ribbons, and seeing me in *Groomer To Groomer*."

"I haven't always been in the *Winner's Circle*," says Veronica. "I've had my share of losses too. Losing makes you appreciate winning all the more. Being in the competition ring is a real learning experience. I have learned how to win - and lose - gracefully."

Her spectacular victory in the *Winner's Circle Tournament* means



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Veronica Frosch
 She is Smokin' Hot
Continued from page 8

that Veronica now has the all important first leg toward the enormous *Triple Crown Jackpot*.

This phenomenal competition could not exist without support from many great sponsors.

"I can't say enough about the sponsors and show promoters to

thank them for all their hard work and for everything they do," says Veronica. "When I began competing about ten years ago, things were very different. I think that the most you could win in a competition was around \$500."

Nature's Specialties sponsors many grooming competitions, but is particularly proud to sponsor the *Triple Crown Jackpot*.

Mary Meeks, president of *Nature's Specialties*, explains why

this ground breaking grooming competition is so important to the grooming industry.

"Grooming competitions that have such huge monetary awards bring world attention to the professional grooming industry," says Mary. "Promoting competitions like the *Winner's Circle Tournament* help elevate the stature of the grooming professional, and bring new respect and professionalism to our industry."

Groomers who used to work in shops, have transformed into stylists who are employed in pet salons and spas. In response to pet professionals changing needs and wants, manufacturers and sponsors like the *Nature's Specialties Company* have come out with many new and wonderful shampoos, coat care and styling products.

It's a win - win situation for everyone; the sponsors, stylists, their clients, and most of all - the pets!

Hard working and talented stylists like Veronica Frosch have had a huge impact on the grooming industry as well. She started her career when she was just a teenager by grooming her family's Poodle. She attended grooming school, and then gathered up the courage to enter a grooming competition. The rest is history.

Seeing her work in *Groomer To Groomer* magazine inspires other groomers to add a little 'flair' to their everyday grooming and may give them the courage to step into the competition ring too.

As you attend seminars and grooming competitions this year, make sure to look for Veronica Frosch in the contest ring.

Can she have another weekend with three spectacular wins? Could be. She's smokin' hot!

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Pacific Northwest Grooming Show

Attracts Groomers to Tacoma, WA

The Tacoma area was visited by nearly 600 groomers for this annual trade show. The show was held recently at the Tacoma Convention Center.

The trade event opened Friday with over 30 exhibitors and many classes and seminars scheduled for the weekend. Friday offered the *Brusher Bather Certificate Program* by Teri DiMarino and an *Animal Behavior Conference* with Gary Wilkes.

Saturday morning offered numerous one-hour classes: *Avant Guard Behavior Mod* by Gary Wilkes, *Camouflage Grooming... How to Hide Faults and Fix Uh-Ohs!* by Teri DiMarino, *Grooming*

By Coat Type by Tim Prior, *Safe Handling Techniques* by Gary Wilkes, *Small Scale Retail* by Audrey Ulrich, *Successful Scissoring Techniques* by Jay Scruggs and sponsored by WAHL.

Saturday afternoon started with the *ABKA 2008 Region 10 Spring Meeting and Luncheon*. The Saturday classes included: *Making Money on Big Dogs* by Jay Scruggs and sponsored by WAHL, *Taking The Dog-Eat-Dog Out Of Play Groups* by Gary Wilkes and *The Giving Groomer* by Audrey Ulrich, *Boarding Kennel Roundtable* by ABKA, *From Salon To Mobile* by Pam Julian and *No Bad*

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(Left to Right) Judge: Marea Tully and PETEDGE Super Model Dog Best in Show Winner: Lauren Snyder of Petsmart in Olympia, WA, grooming a model dog as a Lowchen

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First Aid Basics

for the Grooming Professional

Part 2

By **Dr. Boyd Harrell**
and **Sheryl Spangler**

Part one, of this series covered the topics of checking for proper circulation, checking for dehydration, bleeding control, and abrasions. This part of the series discusses what to do to help out with allergies, breathing problems and choking.

Allergies

There are two types of allergies that are most likely to be seen in the grooming salon. The first is an allergic reaction to an insect bite or sting. Insect bites and stings may cause significant discomfort at the site accompanied by licking and

itching. Swelling may occur at the site of the sting and is commonly manifested as swelling of the face and neck which may be some distance from the actual sting/bite site. Swelling of the muzzle and around the eyes and upper lips can be quite exaggerated.

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Fortunately, most of the time these issues appear much worse than they actually are. However, if swelling is accompanied by difficult or irregular breathing, weakness, nausea or diarrhea then immediate emergency veterinary care is needed for these signs may be indicative of an anaphylactic reaction.

If the reaction is the result of a sting, then check to see if the stinger is still in the skin. If you can locate the stinger, it can be removed by scraping across it with a thin firm object such as a credit card or a plastic spoon. Next apply a thin paste of baking soda and water, followed by ice packs or a cold compress.

The second most common type of allergy likely to be seen is some sort of skin allergy. Common causes of skin allergies are fleas, pollens

from grasses, trees and weeds, and food. Contact allergies from shampoos or other grooming products may also be a cause. These contact allergies may manifest themselves immediately or they can take several hours before signs are evident.

If redness, swelling and severe itching is seen shortly after or during grooming, rinsing the area with cold water for several minutes will help to minimize both the allergy signs and the pet's discomfort. If signs of a contact allergy appear during the grooming session, take careful note of what products were used so that product or products can be avoided in future visits.

Itching from the noncontact allergies can be minimized through the use of soothing shampoos such as an oatmeal shampoo. Again, a constant generous flow of cool water over the red and itchy skin will go a long way in taking away the redness and discomfort. Often relief from the soothing properties of a cool water

bath can be equal to or greater than relief from anti-itch shampoos and the like.

Breathing Problems

Both dogs and cats may tend to hyperventilate due to excitement and this may be the most common breathing abnormality that you will encounter in the grooming salon. Hyperventilation differs from panting in that the breathing is more intense and the panting-like pattern is not easily interrupted. In prolonged and extreme cases, the pet may develop a blank stare and show reduced response to outer stimuli. In addition, the gums may become dry and pale, warning of impending or present shock.

Hyperventilation may also be related to hyperthermia, or heat stroke, which will be discussed in a different section of this article. Generally hyperventilation is a sign of anxiety and placing the pet in a calm, quiet, darkened room is

Continued on page 18

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First Aid Basics – Part 2
Continued from page 16

enough to alleviate the signs.

There are some times when hyperventilation may be related to some other medical issue such as asthma in cats and heart problems in dogs. The lungs are a weak organ in the cat, and simply hyperventilating for a prolonged period of time may cause fluid buildup and potentially fatal consequences. Cats are also easily stressed by handling during these times, and any forced restraint could result in instant death. Cats that suffer from asthma, just like an asthmatic child, may need immediate emergency medical attention to alleviate the signs.

Cats are also very good at masking their problems, that is, having serious medical conditions without obvious outward signs. Or the signs are not easily noticed.

Again, these pets may have very little signs until they are stressed when hyperventilation and shock may seem to come on almost instantaneously.

Dogs may suffer some problems similar to cats however they are more likely to give the owner and caregivers some warning that things are not normal prior to a life-threatening event. Congestive heart failure, which is the most common form of heart failure, is caused by a leaky valve in the heart. In addition heartworm disease, pulmonary hypertension, and lung tumors are all common causes of impaired breathing and/or coughing for dogs.

Brachycephalic dogs and especially the English Bulldog are a special group and may suffer from mild to extreme impedance of air flow due to small nares, a long soft palate, a broad tongue base, poor muscle tone in the throat area, small trachea or windpipe, a large heart in proportion to the chest and

Congestive heart failure, which is the most common form of heart failure, is caused by a leaky valve in the heart.

small lungs in relation to overall body size. The sum total of these anatomical characteristics is bad news for the dog. The most severely affected of these dogs can be catapulted into a life threatening poor air exchange from anxiety, mild exercise or moderately warm air.

Anytime a dog or cat appears overly stressed and panting is not easily interrupted, the pet should be allowed to rest in a quiet place and

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the owner and the pet's veterinarian should be contacted immediately.

Choking

Choking generally refers to a blockage of the airway caused by a foreign object. However there is another breathing problem that may be confused with choking and in fact may lead to choking if uncontrolled and that is a collapsing trachea. A collapsing trachea is caused by a weakness in the cartilage of the windpipe and is commonly seen in small breeds especially the Toy Poodle, Pomeranian, and the Yorkshire Terrier. This is a hereditary problem of unknown origin which may cause a wide spectrum of signs from very mild to severe respiratory distress.

The weakened cartilage in the trachea of these dogs allows their windpipe to flatten which impairs airflow into or out of the lungs. The

most typical sign of a collapsing trachea is coughing. The coughing in more exaggerated cases may become so severe that the dog appears to be choking and the coughing/choking may even cause phlegm to be produced which may occasionally be laced with flecks of blood. When not exercising and in a relaxed state, collapsing trachea victims may show no signs.

Signs though can be brought on quickly with pressure on the neck, exercise, overheating, and anxiety. Even the slightest pressure on the windpipe can cause a strong coughing/choking episode. As an example, an affected pet pulling against a leash or a grooming noose may experience severe respiratory distress. Sometimes these episodes can be so severe as to cause the gums and oral membranes to take on a gray to bluish or purplish color. In the extreme case of tracheal collapse the severe restriction of air to the lungs and resulting oxygen starvation can

A collapsing trachea is caused by a weakness in the cartilage of the windpipe and is commonly seen in small breeds...

result in death.

The first thing to do when the syndrome is recognized is to remove any nooses, collars, leashes, or anything else that might put pressure on the neck. The second thing to do is to provide a calm quiet surrounding so as not to increase the anxiety. It's also important in these situations to provide cool air for breathing, hot air will exaggerate

Continued on page 22

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-Masahide Anderson
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A company sales rep offered me a free sample of Solution. I declined his offer, as I never use cream rinses, detanglers or any sprays since they tend to soften the hair causing mats between grooming. At his insistence I took the sample with me. A month later a customer came in with his badly matted dog and was emphatic the dog not be shaved. I decided to use the sample of Solution and I was able to dematt the hair without shaving! I was very impressed, but decided to reserve judgment until the dog came in for his next grooming. I felt confident his hair would be even more matted since the Solution probably would have softened his hair. To my surprise the dog's hair was in extremely good condition! We now use the Solution on everything snarled and matted. I am totally sold on this wonderful product. I know it will enhance my grooming skills and please my customers. Thank you for such a great product!

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the symptoms. Often times the signs will quickly resolve when these steps are taken, and if they do not, then the pet is to be transported to a veterinarian immediately for emergency care which may include oxygen supplementation, sedation, supportive therapy and shock care.

Choking most commonly is provoked by an object being lodged in the throat or the windpipe. A pet may simply be curious about an object or some food and end up getting it caught in the throat obstructing the airway so they can't breathe. Signs of choking may be pawing at the mouth, violently shaking the head, holding the head and neck stretched out, backing up and wheezing. If these signs go on for a short while you may see the eyes begin to bulge, and normally pink color of the gums and tongue may turn gray or blue. There may be disorientation and even collapse.

A first inclination may be to use your fingers to clear the mouth. This can result in a severe bite to the fingers so do this only with

extreme care. If you feel it is appropriate and a safe thing to do, then pull the dog's tongue forward reaching your fingers as far back into the throat as possible using a quick side to side pass with the finger to dislodge the object. If this doesn't work and the pet is small enough for you to lift them, grasp the rear legs or the pelvis elevating the rear quarters high into the air using gravity to help dislodge the object. If the pet is still choking then a Heimlich maneuver is appropriate.

The Heimlich maneuver used for people has been modified for pets. Depending on the size of the pet, wrap your arms around the abdomen and close one or both hands to make a fist(s) and place your fist just behind the last rib. Push your fist quickly up into the abdomen four or five times. This sequence can be repeated several times if necessary. If the pet loses consciousness then again pull the tongue forward and sweep the mouth trying to remove any objects in the throat. Emergency assisted breathing may need to be started. If these measures have not worked, a sharp blow with the heel of the hand just behind his shoulder blades is

sometimes effective. Immediately transport to a veterinary emergency facility if you are not obviously successful.

Dr. Boyd Harrell and Sheryl Spangler are strategic business coaches and co-founders of Pet Pros Business Coaching, LLC. Dr. Harrell is a veterinarian and former multi-veterinary practice owner, an international speaker and a pet health advisor for Oxyfresh.com.

Sheryl currently owns a grooming school in the Seattle, Washington area, is a pet consultant with Oxyfresh.com and speaks nationally on groomer health and business topics. They are formally trained in life, leadership, health and business coaching and hold advanced certifications in "The Model of Human Behavior," the model of how people interact and what does and does not motivate them.

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1-Groomers Usage Survey, October 2002
 2-Pet Owner Usage Study, October 2002

Getting Down to BUSINESS

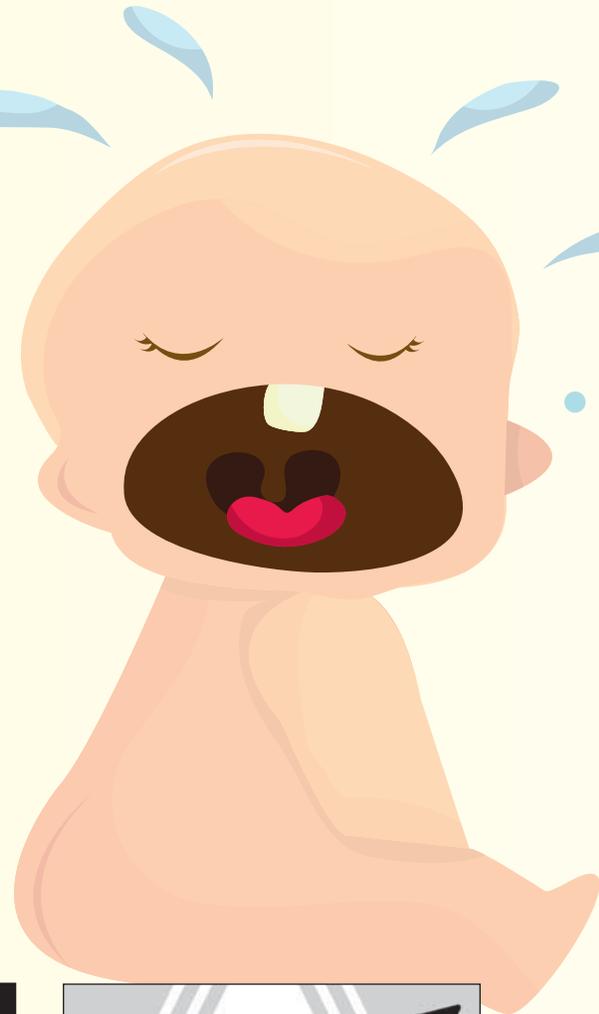
By Teri DiMarino

SPORTSMANSHIP

if you are reading this, rest assured that one of two things has happened: Either my editor, Sally Liddick, is on vacation and this column got past her or she mirrors my feelings and has chosen to allow me to throw myself in front of the proverbial bus.

I've been with *Barkleigh Productions* for nearly a year now and, while I am comfortably settling in, I've had a bit of trouble finding my groove, if you know what I mean. I've been writing about warm and fuzzy stuff; quite content to continue 'flying under the radar.' Well, thank you very much but that comfort level stops.... Now!

Continued on next page



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REQUEST READER SERVICE #4980

I see too much sulking when a contestant doesn't get the placement they think they deserved...

I'm mad! No, I'm not mad! I'm furious! As I step up onto my soap-box I realize that I am about to give a segment of the industry that I hold so dear a no-holds-barred tongue-lashing.

I'm talking about a lack of common courtesy and self control in the competition ring. It doesn't happen often, but when it does it overshadows anything good that person, or anyone around them, has accomplished. It becomes the center of conversation and trumps all else. What has happened to being a good

loser? Or, for that matter, a good winner? I see too much sulking when a contestant doesn't get the placement they think they deserved and, beyond that, it has become way too easy to blame somebody else for the injustice. The simple reality is that a contest of any kind only makes one person truly happy: the winner.

I am keenly aware that these opinions are mine and I know I'm going to "catch it" from a bunch of people with opposing views.

In recent years I have witnessed

some amazing, incredible displays of poor sportsmanship in the grooming competition ring and I, for one, am finding it boorish and awkward. Contest wins and placements have become the center of attention for the "elite" in this competitive segment of the industry. Some people blame this obsession on these competitors vying for *GroomTeam USA* points and an opportunity to wear the coveted *GroomTeam* jacket, honoring the top ten of each competition year.

Well, *GroomTeam* points are only one part of the competition win. Big money prizes, offered at most of the shows, are right up there along with points and bragging rights. Please don't get me wrong! These competitors are excellent groomers and deserve the recognition they work so hard for, but the whiney, unprofessional behavior of some is embarrassing and

Continued on page 26

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Getting Down to Business

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makes me wonder how they attain any level of success outside the ring with their lack of manners, discretion and respect.

I am not a psychologist or analyst by any means. I am a dog groomer. But there is a new generation of thought in the US today and I don't quite understand it. In many schools or sports today there are no winners or losers. Everybody gets a participation medal and there is no last place: only the "last winner."

Grading systems are thought to be demeaning as it categorizes one's abilities and talents. Assessments and suggestions where improvement might be needed are the norm. Yes, I understand that some people do not test well, especially creativity oriented people (like artists and pet stylists for example) but how else does a person learn to do better if they do not know where they stand?

It is my personal opinion some of these youngsters are not prepared for life and when they get out of the protective cocoon of their schooling and find themselves subject to a very rude awakening. Many of these people can't cope with a simple correction and they immedi-

ately perceive it as failure and rejection as they have very limited or no experience with negative feedback. They've always been a winner with a participation award and now they are being told they have failed.

Who do they blame? They often blame the authority figure who passed down this negative edict, be it a school principal, teacher or fellow student who may have been a bit of a bully. You know the rest of the story; you read about these people in the papers and wonder why they did what they did. Many people I speak with feel the same way.

This is not to say that their feelings are not justified, they just don't possess an appropriate and tactful way of displaying them. The first amendment to the constitution is a wonderful gift but, for goodness sake, can't it be controlled with some reasonable discretion? When anyone enters a contest they do so in the hope of winning or, at the

Continued on next page

...the whiney, unprofessional behavior of some is embarrassing...

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Getting Down to Business

Continued from page 26

least, acquiring knowledge and attaining a greater level of expertise.

Winning is good! Winning is fun! If a contestant didn't want to win, or at least improve, they wouldn't enter. But to some, not winning is a direct affront to their talent and the competition is not fun anymore.

Please understand that these poor sportsmanship displays do not happen on a regular basis. But a disgruntled contestant's attitude is a cancerous one and it can spread and do damage to more than themselves. A person voicing a negative opinion about a placement they felt they deserved is taking a direct slap at the contestant that won. It's okay to be upset with a placement you're not happy with. But take it back to your room and scream it out there. It's okay to ask the judge what the

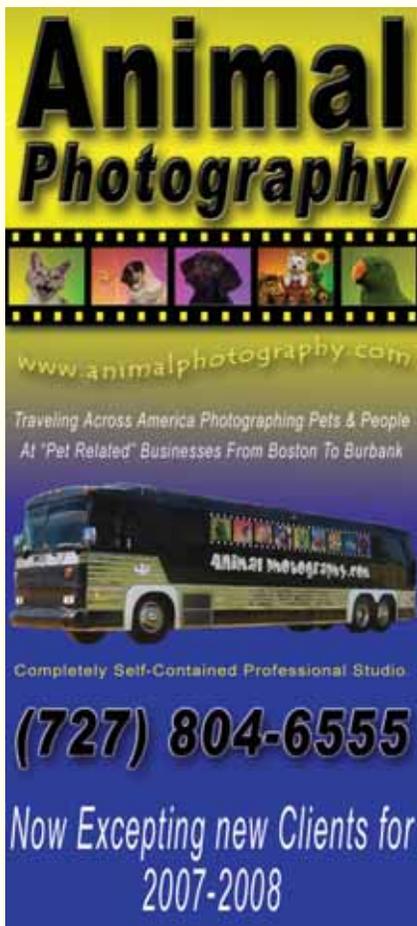
specific problem(s) might have been. But it might serve a contestant better to turn it all into a positive experience by asking what they might have improved or how they can turn it into a first-place dog instead of asking what they did wrong.

At this point I need to inject a word about judging. I find it interesting that a contestant's opinion of a judge is directly related to which ribbon they are, or are not, holding. Just like contest grooming, there are flaws. Every show promoter I know tries their best to present an

objective, qualified variety of judges and every judge I know does their best to fairly judge the entries put before them.

In my entire career I can honestly say that I have never witnessed crooked or political judging in the US contest arena. However, I have definitely witnessed judging I didn't agree with, but I cannot judge the judge if I didn't have my comb on the dog. More often than not I have seen judges distraught at not being able to place their favorite stylist

Continued on page 28



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Getting Down to Business

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because “today was not that contestant’s day.”

On the other hand I have, many times, seen the same contestant win time and again, only to have it construed as judge’s favoritism. This is not fair to the good, consistent groomer who deserves the wins.

Judges try their best to be objective, but some days it is difficult and a judge has to make decisions based on subjective feelings, like what they like the most, offends them the least or what they can “live with”

and “forgive.”

Sometimes when I am judging a class and find myself up against a wall on deciding a placement I ask myself if I could quickly fix what is wrong. Sometimes things can’t be fixed and that may help me come to a decision more easily. Other times I fall back on the groomer’s difficulty factor. It all depends on the dogs presented in the ring on that particular day. Every judge has areas they go to in a time of indecisiveness.

Show organizers are taking strides toward consistent judging methods. They should be applauded for their efforts and assisted in any way possible. They need and respect the constructive input from com-

petitors. They listen! Many shows are choosing to use multiple or panel judging systems as a way of assuring objectivity in the judging. Educational seminars aimed at novice as well as seasoned judges are a huge step in the right direction but judging can only be as consistent as the grooming presented to them.

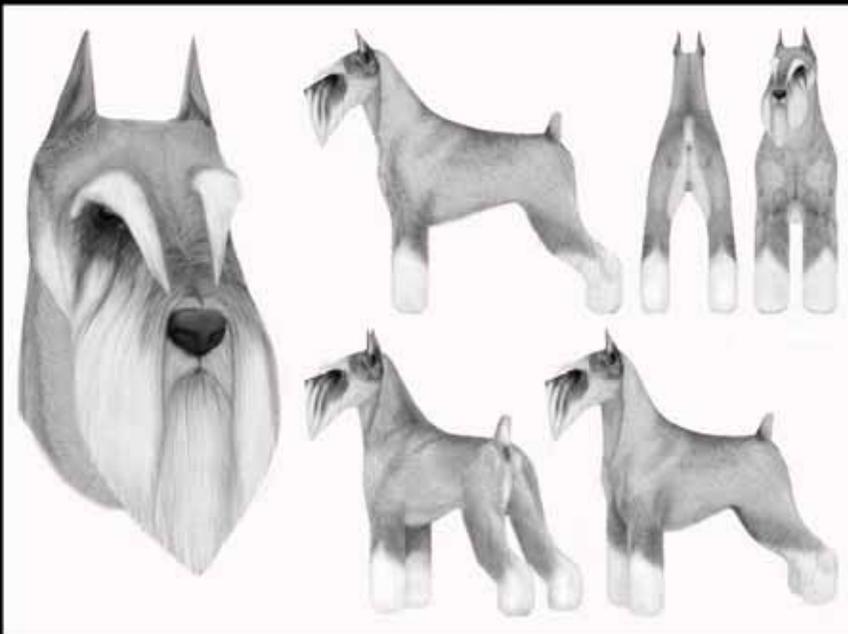
Start looking at the other entries and learn from them: good and bad. Just because a contestant has had a good winning streak doesn’t mean that they are invincible and can’t be “out-groomed.” And, sometimes they just have to accept the verdict and realize that today just wasn’t their day and the judge liked another dog better. Regardless of whether they like it or not, there is a definite degree of subjectivity involved.

Take a moment to sincerely congratulate the winner and look at the work that got them there.

Continued on next page

**Start looking at the other entries
and learn from them: good and bad.**

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Getting Down to Business Continued from page 28

Don't compare it to your work as you are two different people and the judges treat your dogs as two different entries, each with their own attributes and shortcomings. Many contestants just need to lighten up and relax. It's easier to voice displeasure when calm wits prevail and they haven't given themselves a reputation as a sore loser.

Now I want to take a moment to address the winners. I understand how the day of a competition groomer goes. You're up before the crack of dawn feeding, exercising, bathing and drying your dogs. Competition time comes and you are in and out of the ring, only to jump right back into the next class.

If something goes wrong with a piece of equipment or you forgot something, hunting down replacements can be time consuming and frustrating. The end of the day comes quickly and you are back to caring for your dogs. Some time during the course of the day you might have had a thoughtful friend or assistant toss you a sandwich or bottle of water but that's the only meal you might get until after the dogs are all settled in.

If you do finally get dinner, it's the only time you have for yourself or with your friends. You try to catch up on the happenings of the day, only to go back to your room for one final dog walk before hitting the sack and starting all over again the next morning. If you have had a good, winning weekend you are bogged down with photo time and then it's back in the ring at the end of the show for the Best in Show ceremonies. You can't wait to load the van and head for home!

Hey winner...Congratulations! I know it's been a busy, albeit prof-

itable, weekend. But when was the last time you took a moment of your time to thank the sponsors of the classes you won? I'm not talking about the quick, cursory "thank you" as they hand you the check or pose with you for photos. I'm talking about a real, sincere thank you. There are contestants who are very good about this, but I for one understand how this can get past you at a busy time.

Grooming contest purses have increased exponentially over the years and a good, consistent groomer can make more in one weekend than they would have had they stayed and worked in their salon. It is my suggestion that you take a few short moments to pop these generous industry supporters a note (or even an e-mail) of appreciation and recognition for the booty they have bestowed on you and your peers.

Who knows...Some day they may be looking for a contest-quality groomer to work with them and wouldn't it be nice if your name happened to pop into their thoughts as a grateful, courteous prospect with a history of good sportsmanship!

Last, but definitely not least, how about the show promoters? They are the ones that coordinate everything and make it all happen. They are always prepared to hear the negative input that always comes with running any event and try to make it better. But how about giving them some positive feedback about the show and thanks for making it possible for you to showcase your talents?

Well, now I feel better. If you have been offended by this column, maybe I've hit a little too close to home.

Hey, Sally! If this hits the magazine, thanks for the forum. Now I think I'll go catch up on some other long overdue thank you notes.

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The Benefits of Health Reimbursement Arrangements

Part of a Series
By Todd Shelly

Many small business employers are looking for a way to provide some type of health insurance for their employees and themselves. However, premiums for a more traditional health plan are often too pricey to make it possible for the employer to even begin to consider insuring their employees. The more traditional plans are inherently more costly because the consumer must cover the costs of the bureaucratic and administrative expenses of the insurance company.

Continued on next page

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Continued from page 30

Ideally, the consumer would have the ability to only pay for services used. Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRA) are health plans designed to do just that.

HRAs were first implemented in 1955, but didn't become popular until they were refined by the IRS in 2002 to allow employers to adopt new health care plans with a greater number of patient-directed features. An additional ruling by the IRS in 2005 has resulted in explosive growth in HRAs, with over 11 million employees now enrolled in one or more HRA plans.

HRAs are one of the fastest growing health care insurance strategies being offered by employers today, and for very good reason. These plans are the foundation for consumer-driven health plans.

HRAs allow individual employees to customize their benefits without adding administrative cost for the part of the employer. There is no requirement that the employer maintain any health insurance plan and employees may optionally elect lower cost individual insurance.

All businesses, including one-person and part-time businesses, may operate a HRA plan. The most attractive feature of HRAs is that they allow for payment of all qualified health-related expenses on a pre-tax basis regardless of whether these expenses were covered by or used for health insurance.

HRAs are among the most flexible insurance products on the market.

These federally approved accounts may be tied to high deductible insurance plans, or they may be offered on their own. HRAs allow funds to be placed in a special account to reimburse employees for out-of-pocket medical expenses that they may incur. HRAs are similar to Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA).

There are some key differences that separate HRAs from FSAs.

First of all, HRA funds are employer-funded. By definition, employees cannot be made to fund HRAs in any way. Also, there is no risk of forfeiting unused funds. This was a problem with FSA accounts prior to 2002. Even today, if FSA funds are not used within a specified period (two years, two months, and fifteen days from the end of that benefit year), the unused funds can be lost.

Unused HRA funds may roll over on a yearly basis (or not), and if left unused, continue to accrue in size until required. HRA premiums and reimbursements can be modified on a yearly basis, and insurance companies can be switched at any time during the year.

HRA funds can be used to pay for any tax-deductible medical expense.

And here's a genuinely important feature of every HRA plan. There is no requirement on the part of the

employer to set aside funds for the HRA in a separate account. All payments can be made when the expense is incurred. This is beneficial to cash flow.

An HRA offers certain advantages to both employers and employees. An employer can save tens of thousands of dollars annually by offering an HRA. Funds placed into employee HRA accounts, along with premium fees and employee reimbursements, are tax-deductible. HRA accounts force employees to be more discriminating with the way in which they use their health care funds, which helps employers to control costs.

Amounts provided by employers to employees are tax free and may be used to pay for a group or individual health insurance or for any non-insured medical expense. These benefits are not wages and therefore are not subject to income taxes or wage taxes, FICA, or worker's compensation. The benefits formula may be derived by the employer in any manner that is not considered discriminatory to the owner and highly compensated employees.

If the employer opts to offer a high deductible health insurance plan, the employer is able to reduce premium payments and save money. The HRA is then established to cover the difference between the former deductible and the new high deductible amount. Ultimately, by coupling an HRA with a high deductible health insurance plan, employers are able to reduce their health care costs in a way which keeps employees happy and places no extra financial burden upon the employees.

Employees benefit because they are able to enjoy the same level of health care coverage, without having to assume greater financial responsibility. They also have greater control with this system, and are able to use the health care services of their choosing, without the limitations associated with managed care programs.



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A *Groomers Club Directory* will be provided to members that list participating companies, their products, special offers, and contact information. The *Groomers Club Directory* will also be available online at www.GroomersClub.com. The website will list the same information as the printed directory. A simple click on any participating company name will take a member

directly to that company's homepage, making it even easier to view products and order immediately!

A one-year membership to *The Groomers Club* is only \$29.95, which includes one-year subscriptions to *Groomer to Groomer* and *Pet Boutique & Spa* magazines. Plus, more of your favorite companies are joining everyday!

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REQUEST READER SERVICE #4992

Money from Heaven for Groomers

By **Deb Disney-Nusbaum**

As groomers, we are always looking for ways to boost our income without adding extra work or cost. I've recently fallen in love with a great program for groomers, from NuVet Labs, one of the older companies in the pet supplements industry. (They've

been around more than twelve years.)

Actually, NuVet's program is quite clever. They don't require us to sell anything or invest any money, which got my attention. It's so easy. NuVet Labs sends us free samples of their product to hand out to our customers whose dogs and cats have skin and coat problems, allergies, arthritis and

joint problems, etc.

In exchange, they pay us approximately 50% of the retail price each and every time these customers order. Not only does this boost our bottom line, but in most cases the improvement to the pet's health is dramatic.

The product itself is a natural, human-grade supplement. This product is so pure, it's actually manufactured in a pharmaceutical environment, meeting and exceeding GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) as defined by the FDA (for humans), which is virtually unheard of in the pet industry.

It took NuVet Labs eight years to develop this unique product, which is only distributed through veterinarians and pet professionals, like us. It is not available in pet stores, which is another plus.

Initially, veterinarians and show dog breeders were selected to distribute the products because they are the most finicky and educated regarding the health needs, nutrition and costs spent on their animals.

Groomers were then added to the list because we have first-hand access (no pun intended) to so many dog and cat problems, especially skin and coat, allergy, arthritis and joint problems, etc.

So far, more than twenty-thousand groomers, vets and breeders across the country are already in the program. Many earn \$1,500 to \$2,500 every month, for no work beyond handing out the samples.

To learn more about their Groomers Program, call NuVet Labs at 1-800-474-7044. Request Reader Service Card #2903.

Deb Disney-Nusbaum, the owner of Aldemar Weimaraners, has been a groomer and a breeder of award winning Weimaraners for more than 25 years.

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I AM the only one who grooms at my place. I don't have the time, inclination or guts to try to train anyone to actually cut hair. I often wish that I did have someone to help lighten the load. I think how great it would be to be able to take off and know that there is still money coming in during my absence. But I guess I shouldn't complain, seeing as how I have cut back to four day work weeks anyhow. My next goal is to cut it back to three, but due to my shopping binges I don't think that's going to happen any time soon. Yes, I am spoiled. But I'm allowed to be.....I'm old.

Continued on next page

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The New Girl
Continued from page 34

In a sudden change of circumstances, I found myself in need of a new someone to help bathe. As all of you know, there is always a myriad of people who want to work with you as a dog groomer. Many are current customers who "would just love to play with the dogs all day," like we get to. We also know that 99% of these people would drive us to seek out the nearest mental health facility if we had to spend ten hours a day with them. I have a hard time tolerating these people for more than ten minutes.

There are actually not more than a handful of people that I know personally with whom I could see myself working. That is without the need for resisting the temptation of shaving their heads when they irritate me. For some reason, if I am in one of my "moods" from being irked

at someone, I have a strong urge to chop off a piece of their hair. Yes, I have acted upon that feeling a few times. Don't go getting all aghast at that. I never cut off BIG sections of their hair...just a few strands here or there. Oh, just admit it. You'd love to do it to someone yourself. You just don't have the nerve....work with me on this one. (I can tell, there are SO many things I could teach some of you! :)

At any rate, one of my very good

friends, Trudy, offered to come help out if I was ever in need. Well, I was definitely in need and she is quite the 130-pound work horse. She may be little, but she is mighty. She also boards horses and cleans sixteen stalls. All by hand with a wheel barrow and fork. Twenty-seven loads a day hauled out to a manure pile, to be precise. Now THAT'S a lot of poop! I knew she'd be just perfect.

Continued on page 36

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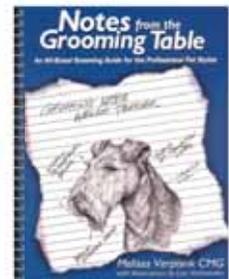
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She is the same each day that she comes in. She totes along a thermos of coffee, two peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and two Little Debbie cakes. Everyone else in my building just go to McDonald's or Subway. She conserves her money. I should take some lessons from her, but I'd rather support my local economy. I'm thoughtful like that.

When I first set up my shop, I had my tub's frame made for my own comfort and height. Why I get such vertically challenged people in to help sometimes is beyond me. On day one, Trudy was bathing her first dog. When I saw the water flying over the back of the Golden Retriever and landing on the outside of the tub, I immediately had a feeling of déjà vu. It brought back memories of when Lou used to help me and the water would run down off the ledge of the tub onto the floor. It brought a tear to my eye. I wiped it away before Trudy could see it. I

"HEY MS. PENELEC, ARE YOU MARRIED TO THE HEAD ELECTRICIAN OR WHAT?" I ASKED HER ONE DAY.

then heard the familiar trickle of water hitting the floor as the stream traveled down the lip of the tub. Darn my stinging eyes, anyhow...

Later in the day, I looked over and saw her standing in front of the tub with each foot turned outward, her heels almost touching. I chuckled.

"What's so funny?" she asked. "What's with the 'duck-foot-stance'?" I asked, imitating her.

"Oh, that's how I always stand," she replied, looking down at herself.

"Uh....ok," I stammered. But I wasn't REALLY making fun of her. There are just some things you don't see in the course of a normal day.

The girl does know how to work for sure. She never complains about how big the dog is, how much it craps, or how wild it is. She doesn't

complain about the people, the hours or the phone ringing all the time. She DOES however think the electric company is in need of large donations. She has a penchant for turning on all the hallway lights when she goes to the bathroom and neglecting to turn them back off when she's done. Believe me, with that thermos of coffee she brings, she makes quite a few trips down that hall each day.

"Hey Ms. Penelec, are you married to the head electrician or what?" I asked her one day. "Shut off the hall lights when you're done with them," I told her.

"But I can't see to get to the bathroom," she said.

"You can turn them on....just turn them off when you come back," I instructed.

"Oh geesh. Now I have to kill myself going to the bathroom and trip up those steps, all because you are afraid to pay the electric bill," she said laughing.

"Light a candle," I shot back.

Continued on page 37

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The New Girl
Continued from page 36

So for days, she has been making an announcement when she goes to the bathroom. Something rather snide, I'd say. "Here I go, down the dark, lonely hallway," she'll say. "If you hear anything banging on the wall, it's just me trying to find my way back," she adds. "If I don't return in 15 minutes, it's because I can't see to find my way out of the bathroom," she sometimes says.

Last week I thought she'd killed herself on her way there. It sounded like a Clydesdale coming down the three steps out of the bathroom. I couldn't decide if she had ricocheted off the walls or had indeed tumbled onto the floor. "Did you fall down the steps?" I yelled over my shoulder. "No, it's just hard to see where they are in the dark," she re-

torted. "I told you to turn the lights on," I shot back. It's probably because of that "duck footed stance" she has I thought to myself as I mentally grinned. She is improving though.

For an otherwise seemingly intelligent person, I have to say she's mentally challenged when it comes to using the cash register. THAT she's incredibly bad at. It never fails, just when I think she's got the thing licked, she bellows for me. Someone comes in and I send her out to ring them up. "Do I HAVE to?" she groans. "Yes," is my only response.

I await the familiar beeping of the register as she punches in the prices of the items. One beep, two beeps and so on, until I hear the ear piercing squeal of the register refusing to open.....then all goes quiet for a second or two as she hits the "clear" key. Then the squeal once again falls on my ears. Then the inevitable.... "BONNIE" is what comes

next as she appears in the doorway of the grooming room with one of those grins that makes me want to bop her over the head with the broom. "The register won't open," she says innocently.

I then trudge out to fix her screw up. I know she secretly just doesn't want to have to use the thing and this is her way of getting out of it. I refuse to give in. I just keep telling her that when she goes to the great beyond, I'm going to make sure that the register is going to be used as her headstone. Then SHE can listen to that infernal squealing for all eternity.

Just yesterday I thought I'd try to get her to master the credit card machine. So far we're still stuck on getting her to remember which way to slide the card through the terminal. I believe she's one of those people who's kind of dyslexic when it comes to distinguishing her left from her right... ahhhh...

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REQUEST READER SERVICE #5001

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Grooming Tables

by Gary Hartwell

When it comes to professional grooming tables, groomers today can choose from hydraulic, electric, stainless steel, standard stationery and more. Most groomers use a combination of different tables for different areas of the salon. The amount of money a groomer can spend varies from thousands of dollars for a stainless steel electric table to under a hundred dollars for a simple stationery one. No matter what a table costs, it is important to keep it in the best condition for as long as possible.

Both electric and hydraulic tables have pivot points on the lift arms under the table. These points need to be regularly cleaned and oiled. If the table is noisy when moving up and down, oiling these points should resolve the problem. It is also necessary to periodically tighten or loosen the pivot bolt which loosens or tightens over time. Tightening the pivot bolt will prevent the table top from becoming wobbly.

Some styles of tables have pins at these pivot points, which are held in place by set screws. Be sure that pins are secure and in correct position and that the set screws are tight.



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All table tops should be kept clean. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for cleaning. If no instructions are provided, scrub with simple soap and water followed by a disinfectant/deodorizer. Many tables have rubber tops and edging that will with time peel and wear. Many pet supply distributors sell replacement product by the foot. This is a relatively inexpensive way to rejuvenate a table that



Continued on next page

Grooming Tables
Continued from page 38

is otherwise still in good working condition.

Hydraulic tables are popular due to price and freedom of positioning without worrying about electrical set up or dedicated circuit. They are also great for wet locations such as the bathing area. The most common problem experienced with hydraulic tables is that the hydraulic pump can develop air bubbles in the sealed cylinder. If the table is not operating properly, the hydraulic pump may need to be purged of these air bubbles. With



the assistance of one or two people, expand the hydraulic by manually lifting the table top as high as it will go. While holding the table in the up position, pump the hydraulic as many as 40 to 50 times. This should purge out any air that is in the pump.

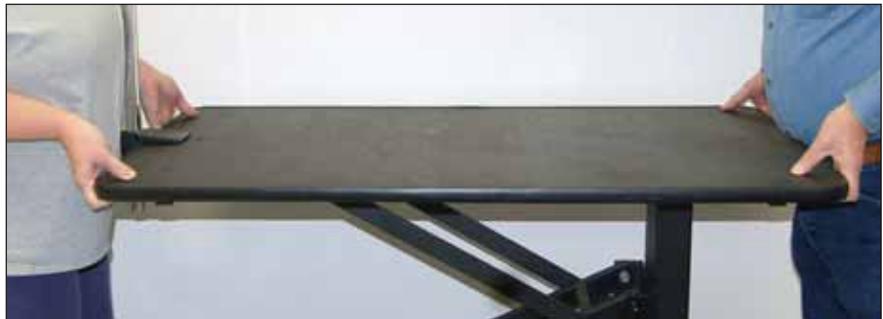
Electric tables are becoming more affordable and many groomers now have at least one electric table. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for installation and use. Even though most tables use minimal amps to operate, it is recommended that a dedicated circuit be used rather than an electrical strip bar with other equipment such as clippers and dryers. A 15 amp circuit for most electric tables is sufficient. Always unplug the table when servicing and cleaning.

When operating any moving

table, always keep your fingers, hands, and pets away from lift arms. Under table lift arms run against support leg brackets and in some tables creates pinch points that can cause serious injury.

Standard tables with fixed legs are still the most affordable and are practical in bathing areas and as overflow. Always check that the leg bolts are tight and secure and that the rubber feet are in good condition. A common complaint with fixed leg tables is that they are not the correct height. Many pet supply companies carry leg extensions to adjust the height of fixed leg tables.

Never use a table that is not operating properly as it is a safety risk to pets and employees. If simple maintenance does not correct the problem, consult a technician or replace.



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REQUEST READER SERVICE #5004

HERE'S WHY ADVERTISING DURING A RECESSION IS GOOD BUSINESS

By Robert Evans Wilson, Jr.

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A few years ago when my wife was expecting our second son, we realized it was time to move our first born out of the nursery and into a regular bed. So, on a Saturday afternoon, we retrieved my old bunk-beds from my parent's attic. All we needed to do was buy a couple of new mattresses. The following morning, as we lingered over coffee and the Sunday paper, my wife pointed to several ads and exclaimed, "Look at all these sales. We picked the perfect time to buy

a new mattress!"

Being in the advertising business, I chuckled, and said, "Honey, that's the beauty of advertising. Mattresses are always on sale, but no one ever notices that until they're in the market for one."

Once buyers are ready to enter the market for a particular item, their attention to advertising for that product is heightened. It's information they want, and the questions on their minds are: "Who has the best product? Who has the best

price? And where can I buy it?"

This phenomenon is known as Ready-to-Buy and occurs at different times for different people. If a company is not communicating

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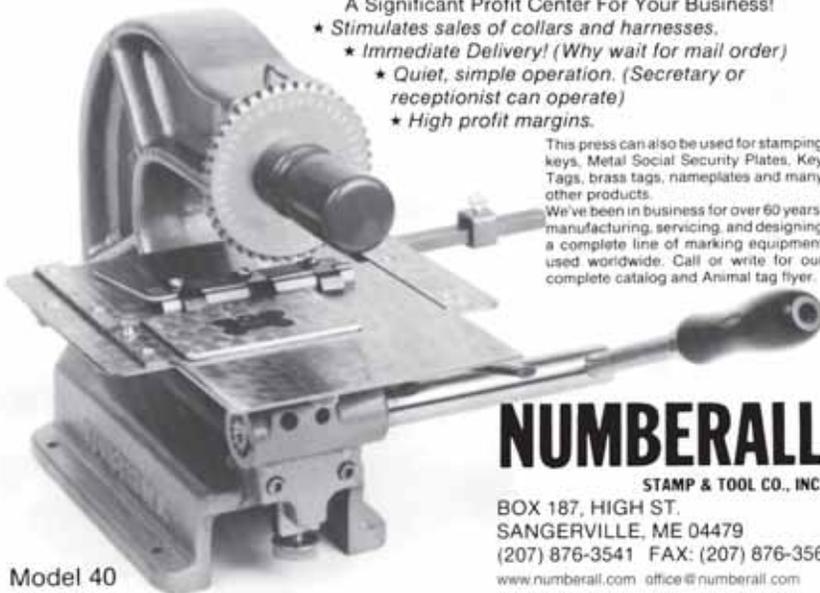
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JB85

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Here's Why Advertising During
A Recession is Good Business
Continued from page 40

with them when they enter the market, then that company will not be considered in the buying decision. This fact is just as true during a recession.

Sometimes we need to remind ourselves what the short-term benefits of advertising are – during good times or bad – such as: it creates sales immediately; it generates added business from current customers; and it brings in new leads and prospects.

Then there is the long-term benefit of advertising: it works cumulatively. The more familiar people become with a brand, the more favorable they feel toward it, and the more likely they are to buy it.

In other words, people don't like to do business with strangers. And, since the owners and staff of a com-

pany can't personally meet all their prospective customers in advance, their advertising must do this for them.

Maintaining brand recognition should be considered an on-going business investment. The moment it stops it begins to lose power immediately – and future sales are in jeopardy. Studies have shown that it takes four to six months to see the results of an advertising program. Cutting back during a down-turn is like throwing away your investment. Maintenance today costs much less than rebuilding tomorrow.

This doesn't mean advertisers shouldn't change anything. In fact, they should work to get the most out of their advertising dollars by eliminating emotion-based, image-building advertising and using instead informative ads that demonstrate their product's superiority.

Perhaps the best reason to keep advertising during a recession is that it may actually provide an opportunity for companies to dominate their market. Many businesses make the mistake of assuming that because money is tight everywhere, customers will be spending less and therefore money spent on advertis-

ing will be wasted.

Another false assumption is that it's safe to reduce the advertising budget if the competition is reducing theirs. However, research has revealed that companies maintaining or increasing advertising during periods of economic slowdown will boost market share. Some companies will even see an increase in sales over their competitors who decrease advertising.

As we weather the current economic challenges of high gasoline prices and a real estate slump, you can already see many leading companies increasing their advertising budgets. The benefit is clear, when fewer competitors are advertising, the ones that continue or increase their advertising become more visible to the consumer, and that could be – you!

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LETTERS to the Editor



Clean up the Grooming Industry!

I love your magazine, I love learning and improving, but the article by Wes Murph is a joke. So Mr. Big Idea/Excited Newbie thinks we should have licensing and continuing education, and can tell us how to schedule dogs and all sorts of great stuff after only ONE YEAR owning his salon!! WOW!!

I think you should stick to EXPERIENCED people with a solid overview based on reality to write for your magazine. Yeah, we could ALL have a big salon like his if we were ALL in Los Angeles or similar areas - but I sure wouldn't be scheduling one dog per groomer per hour!! (This is what he advocates on his web site.) How many groomers work in salons like his? Less than 5%, is my guess.

I certainly hope he is paying more than 50% commission, since he has all these other great ideas about how groomers could be improved. After 25 years of grooming, I

“ Does a groomer go to jail for practicing without a license? That would be SOOOOOO idiotic!! ”

Debbie Smith, Tennessee

personally think most groomers could be greatly "improved" with better income, like 75% commission to an Independent Contractor. Employees could have less commission but should have health care and paid holidays.

The licensing issue - I wrote in to *petgroomer.com* on the groomer talk forum about this. Ever had a bad hairdresser? Bad mechanic? Bad plumber? Bad DOCTOR?? All "licensed professionals". Licensing doesn't do anything except become a moneymaker for the "license givers", create another aspect of cumbersome, unneeded enforcement that government can run inefficiently, and another reason to raise taxes so we pay more for less. I am sick of government trying to regulate almost anything, so my view is that we need LESS of this type of ineffective pretense at "improving" some industry.

Why would rural groomers who get asked for shave-offs 90% of the time need breed styling exams? Why does anyone? If you're good, and you're in the right area, you get lots of customers. If you're not that good, and people go to you, why should some bureaucrat tell you that you're not getting a license. Then what? Does a groomer go to jail for practicing without a license? That would be SOOOOOO idiotic!!

CE credits? Sure, the grooming industry has had changes, but really, they aren't necessary for every groomer to know, nor do they require 5 credits per year. The "changes" are not medical breakthroughs, after all! If a groomer wants to see what's out there, he/she can. If they don't, who cares? Insisting on CE credits as a condition of

retaining a hypothetical license (which I hope never happens) is cumbersome and unnecessary.

Here's what would really benefit the grooming industry: customer education and higher prices!! How many times does an owner comment, "I pay more for my dog's haircut than I do for mine!" No sh*t, Sherlock! - want to know how long a dog's haircut takes compared to a "people" cut??

Well, here in my pokey town, I pay \$18-20 for my haircut (includes wash and dry). My appointment lasts about 30-35 minutes, including 10 minutes sitting in the chair after the shampoo because it is useless to start hand-drying sopping wet hair on either a person or a dog right away. Therefore, my hair "air dries" a bit before the stylist blow-dries it.

The typical groom price in this area is \$25-30 for a small dog, which, at hairdressing prices, allows for about 40 - 45 minutes per dog! I've been grooming for 25 years, and I still like to have 75 - 90 minutes to do a Poodle, Schnauzer or Shih Tzu, and close to 2 hours to do a Bichon in good shape. (I do mostly styles, and rarely shave a dog.) When I lived in a big city and worked in a busy salon, I had to answer the phone, attend to customers, etc., so naturally the dog had to stay in the salon for somewhat longer than my minimal "hands-on" time.

I have HV blowers and dryers, *Bonat Rocket Dryer* (Request Reader Service #4949), *Geib Shears* (Request Reader Service #4948) and good equipment. Dog grooming should cost more than it does - groomers wouldn't

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Letters to the Editor
Continued from page 42

need to book so heavily, they would make good money with less stress, they would have less burnout and more fun, and they would have money and energy left over to keep improving and learning.

This would lead to more professionalism and an improved industry without pushing licensing and continuing education on an over-worked, underpaid group of pet-lovers whose major drawback is that they followed their hearts into a career without having the business background or knowledge required to structure their work to ensure a better income.

Maybe now some of us groomers can write in ideas to Wes Murph on how he could have improved his sales of that chemotherapy device he used to sell, and give him advice on how he could have avoided the burnout he experienced, and.....

Sincerely,
Debbie Smith
Tennessee

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Shocked!

I have to say that I was shocked and had some problems with some of the articles in the Jan/Feb. issue of *Groomer to Groomer*. In particular the "Clean up the Grooming Industry" article by Wes Murph wes@thestudlypooch.com.

I took issue with "Problem #1" Lack of Licensing. While I agreed with his structuring of the "regulation board" it seemed to me that he's trying to create a cushy job for himself, on said Board, perhaps?

I disagreed with a day of 3-5 breed trims test and having to pass by 80% on each dog. If I wanted to do competition style grooming, or if it was called for in my area, I would do it! Breed specific trims (or lack thereof) is NOT the problem w/ the industry! Health and Safety should be the main focus of ANY Licensing, IMO. That is where the problem lies. (again IMO).

Next...

"What's in a Word?...." By Sam Kohl. To begin, I'm not certified by any organization (other than the "Crazy Groomer Club" LOL). Even I was offended by the stab at ISCC's "Meritus" certification. He basically said it was a "farce" (my word, not his)! I know, from talking to "Meritus" groomers the amount of hard work and studying that goes into that status of Certification. How dare he try to take credibility away from these

groomers?!? If I was head of ISCC or a groomer, Meritus, I'd have quite a bit to say to Mr. Kohl!

Ask any English teacher, new words and meanings are added regularly to the dictionary (hence 18th Editions, etc.) The English Language is constantly evolving with the addition of new words and descriptive slang.

Niki Rickett
Custom Clips Grooming
New York

Cleaning up the Grooming Industry

I am probably not the only one writing to you about this as I have seen it discussed on other grooming sites. The article that Wes wrote while hopeful and optimistic also demonstrated his lack of experience in the industry. He simply has not been in the business of grooming long enough to really have a good feel for how things are on a larger scale. What works for his urban business may not work well for someone in a totally different area. This inexperience gave this article a lack of credibility. I have been doing this for almost 14 years. I find his enthusiasm refreshing, but I think if you want groomers to listen and take the issue

Continued on next page

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Letters to the Editor
Continued from page 44

seriously you really need to find a more seasoned professional to write the article for you. Most groomers discussing the article seemed to concentrate on how "green" the author is more than the topic he was writing about. I don't fear licensing, but his simplistic answers to complicated issues just won't work. If it was that simple, it would have happened a long time ago.

Melissa Francisco
TransFURmations
Mobile Pet Spa
New York

Throwing in the Towel...

I've had my shop for 8 years now and have been grooming since 1978. I'm one of those that actually went to a reputable grooming school to learn and it took me 1-1/2 years to be certified cause I was also going to college at the same time.

My first problem is I'm not making any money. And with all my

research and paying to have the business analyzed, the problem is in the payroll. Too high. And I've concluded that the 50% commission is impossible. Tell me if I'm wrong. I know back in the day, groomers were independent contractors, which meant that groomers were responsible for ALL their supplies and tools. The shop owner didn't have payroll taxes, and workers comp. So the 50% commission was fair.

But today I'm paying for shampoo, electric, gas, office supplies, payroll taxes, workers comp, health insurance, paid vacations, bereavement pay and others, too many to mention. But the grooming industry has been the same for so many years, these old dogs can't and won't learn any new tricks. I lowered the commission to 40% and you had thought I was cutting off their arms and legs. Even at 40% it's breaking even and the groomers are making more money than me.

I love the fact that you are trying hard to change the image of this industry. And you are aware that most shops, (salons) are paying their staff under the table and pocketing

Continued on page 46

Chris Pawlosky's Grooming Tips

Feet Tricks



I groom many very wiggly Wheaten Terriers. Like many Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers, they hate their feet being touched. I did my best to create the perfectly trimmed foot on my pets, on a less than cooperative dog.

A few months ago I had my fill of Terrier feet. Always a few tangles between toes and always hard to get them tight without making them look pointed or wedged out.

So I grabbed my #3 Oster skip tooth blade and clipped hair off the last two knuckles only. Clipping around all four toes on foot and not touching the hock or pastern coat. All that was left to trim was around the pad. It seems that every foot, with few exceptions, turned out nice and has not had tangles between the toes when returning in the sixth week. I have also used this trick on a Giant Schnauzer and an Airedale. Magic!



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Letters to the Editor

Continued from page 45

the cash revenue. But I'm an honest business owner trying to run this business honest and legal.

I'm throwing in the towel, I give up. I have the IRS breathing down my back cause I can't pay the back payroll taxes. I'm a hard working person who has always been there for my clients, their pets and my employees and I can't make it anymore.

The other challenges to this business are the veterinarians not backing up the groom shops. Today I had a client tell me that her vet said it was our fault that her dog had infected anal glands, that we weren't expressing the glands. Unbelievable. With the vets and pet owners not taking responsibilities and me not making any money, THAT'S IT!

My shop is for sale, and I'm praying someone will make an offer soon.

*Mercedes Nakano
Country Waggin
Resort and Grooming*

Passionate Issue

It has been some time since we last talked about this very passionate issue in our industry...that of "groomer licensing" on a national level.

As I read the article on page 38 of the *Groomer to Groomer*, Vol.27, Ed.1, my heart began to beat with excitement. There are parts of this article which make a ton of really good sense; however, there are some areas that really need a great deal of help.

As you may remember several years ago you asked several of us to help write a licensing program for the states to all be involved in. So we did just that. We started it at a convention in Hershey, Pennsylvania with Judy Kurpiel, and Haley, a young lady from, I want to say, Tennessee. Because I had been involved in drafting more legislation than others on the committee, I was asked to write the draft of the testing and legal material.

I knew full well that we may be in legislative discussions for a while. Mostly because I had just finished working with the Department of Agriculture in Michigan for two plus years just to get the study material and tests written for the pesticide testing manual. The results were awesome and now Michigan is a tri-state testing area for the Pesticide Applicators License. We are also

the first state where there is only one test to be taken for our category (small animals 7G).

Therefore, I would like to respond to the following issues:

Problem #1 - Licensing

This section refers to "Designing a National 'pet grooming organization.'" The board of knowledgeable industry veterans is perfect, with responsibilities in the areas of written and testing materials, and passing grades of 80% or better, is also excellent. As far as doing breed trims etc. with practicum's - that is going a bit too far. Keep in mind that this is for state licensure and NOT an industry licensure.

The reason that I would encourage you to use this vocabulary is because we already have National Certifying Industry Organizations that are, and have been working to bring current industry issues to us, and have done an excellent job.

Example - the *National Dog Groomer's Association of America* was formed in the late 1969 and then began an outstanding Certification Program in 1988, not to mention the many spin-off associations that have, and still do, offer many wonderful continuing educational programs. Not to mention the spectacular industry show sponsors that

Continued on next page

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Letters to the Editor

Continued from page 46

also offer continuing educational programs at all of the trade shows.

Problem #2 – Lack of Continuing Education Programs.

As so stated these courses are normally taught by industry leaders and, they currently ARE as we speak.

Continuing Educational Credits are necessary in every industry. And yes, safety issues are a must. These issues should include and not be limited to – plumbing, electrical and fire safety, air exchange, and, oh let's not forget, the maintenance and clean up from the toxic waste from our clients in the pet walking areas. These are areas that impact the community first, and this should be our main concern from the start as responsible pet professionals.

Continuing Educational Credits are a must and the best places to obtain them are at a trade show or workshop, allowing a much more positive environment for learning, not to mention the networking with others and listening to new and creative ideas. As well as the fact that the information is industry driven and NOT internet driven.

There are several other areas that should also be addressed:

A. Somehow the financing has not been mentioned

Solution: The fee for state licensure should be split between the state and the Industry office located in each state where the records should be maintained for the state, as well as a national, office. This will get the law enforcement authorities (*Department of Agriculture*) to support us. Just like the *State Board of Cosmetology* is managed (with experienced industry professionals enforcing the rules). Local licensing municipalities are for the most part an agent for the local police departments and often a part of the *Weights and Measures Ordinance Division*. Having said that, please know that the animal control officers, for the most part, ONLY need 80 to 100 hours of training to tell us how to take care of pets, etc. Working with the department of agriculture (veterinarians) is far more appropriate.

B. Follow-thru on OUR part

Solution: GET INVOLVED. Most of the industry news publications will tell us of events going on in our areas as well as in other states. SHAME ON US if we do not go to these and keep ourselves motivated and educated. Just the getting away from our home base and networking with fellow professionals from other states can be both

exhilarating and motivating. Hearing a fellow pet groomer that has the same problems you do can be very uplifting. Making new friends; seeing all friends; all growing together, is an awesome feeling.

While the Internet may be a wonderful source of information, it is NOT as positive a platform for continued education and training. We all work on live pets on the tables in front of us. Our industry is a show and tell, hands on industry. You can't get that from the Internet.

The sharing of problem solving ideas is another area we all need. We all learn from the questions that others ask. At a seminar we are there to learn and there is less chance of interruption. There is a greater chance for all of us to return hard charged and ready to implement all of the new ideas, thus enabling us to further educate our clients and our communities on responsible pet ownership.

C. Legislative Issues

Solution: STAY AWAKE AND GET INVOLVED. I am addressing the BSL, Breed Specific Legislation, and mandatory spay / neuter laws. Many states are pushing it right past your eyes. Educate yourself on the issues and realize how these laws would directly impact you and your career as a groomer.

These issues are far more concerning to US as an industry due to the domino fallout affect financially. Jobs that would be affected include, but are not limited to: veterinarians, groomers, boarding kennels, pet shops, feed stores, manufacturers, suppliers – and because of the large numbers of people involved with conformation showing, obedience, agility, hunting and other performance events, such as pet grooming and certification workshops, hotel, motels, restaurants, and automotive industries would also be affected. But that's a whole other topic.

Sally and Gwen, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, and your loving and very caring staff. As an industry, we can not thank you enough for all the great work that you do each and every year with the outstanding programs that you offer us in a very positive and uplifting environment.

I only hope that Wes will not be upset from my reply, but rather encouraged to express his thoughts again and help us be problem solvers. We, as an industry, need more proactive and not reactive solutions.

*Thank you again,
Carolyn Bullock NCMG
Director
Academy of Animal Arts
Dearborn Heights, Michigan*

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Cleaning up the grooming industry? Feedback

I received my copy of *Groomer to Groomer* and I saw a featured cover highlight that says, "Clean up the Grooming Industry". I read the article and I say who is this guy? Who would give him this space on a national publication?

I too left the corporate world after 20+ years and became a groomer. I went to *The North Jersey School of Dog Grooming* (established 1965) and graduated. I am a tool guy by nature and I found this field a nice fit with my natural skills. My wife and I both lost our jobs within nine months of each other and started our own shop. We follow our guts and use much of the skills we learned over the years and we have been very successful.

Getting back to Wes. What are his qualifications in regards to grooming? He advocates licensing and continuing education. Nice ideas, but let's look at both.

Licensing will only create more expense for the groomer who will now have to send a check to the state to have the privilege of being licensed. What will this really do? We cannot even secure our national borders and we spend enough money on security to give everyone in the country free health care. So what will this really buy the groomer?

Continuing education can be had by purchasing videos and attending the classes that groups offers at shows. Who is going to pay for further education? Wes's editorial

talks about the lack of health care for groomers, so let's have everyone pay more fees and school costs too.

I believe in market forces. They help close poor grooming shops and that is great. Regulations only cause people to pay more money for little real benefit. The hospital industry is heavily regulated and each year thousands and thousands of people die in hospitals and they don't even have to tell the public. These institutions are operated by people with Masters Degrees and by the Docs. Even with all their education it seems to have little positive effect on the problems they have.

Wes should stick to grooming and if he wants the corporate world again, go back and get a job there.

Eric Bond

"Faux Paws"

I am writing regarding the article written by Sam Kohl. I didn't feel it was professional or necessary for this article to even be in your magazine. I do not know what Mr. Kohl was attempting to accomplish.

I followed Mr. Kohl's suggestion to use my dictionary and found words such as condescending, hypercritical, outdated and counterproductive.

I also noticed a few "Faux paws" by Mr. Kohl himself. I am not even going to mention his "problem" with noose. Since in the dictionary, a noose is a loop with a slipknot.

BUT the use of Groom? Yes, Groom, the noun, is a man, BUT Groom, the verb, "is to clean, brush and otherwise maintain the appearance of a ... horse, dog, cat." Look it up,

it is in the dictionary.

And Meritus? The etymology of Merit, the past participle of the word meaning "to claim respect...praise, excellence and worth." That is also in the dictionary.

I think a magazine such as yours should set higher standards, and attempt to build up, not tear down. Very bad form.

If anyone made our industry appear "illiterate," I believe it was Mr. Kohl himself. He and your magazine owe many Meritus groomers an apology.

Sincerely,
Susan Alexander
NDGAA Certified Groomer

"Clean up our Industry"

After having read Wes's article on cleaning up the grooming industry, I found myself in a bit of an agitated state. I am one of many Americans that believe that the Government has way too many fingers in my business. I know what you're thinking. "She must be breaking the law" or "She has something to hide." Well, that is not necessarily true. I try to obey the law and I claim my income and I pay my taxes each year.

On the same side, I believe that bringing more laws and lawyers and bureaucrats

Continued on next page

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Letters to the Editor *Continued from page 48*

into the mix only makes for red tape and complications. This costs the little guy much needed money. Like all groomers, I work hard for my money. It seems that I always have too many expenses for my income. I most certainly don't want or need another licensing fee or testing time to waste my grooming time.

I went home from work on the evening I read Wes's article and couldn't stop thinking about the situation. I agree that it would lend credence to our profession to have a way for customers to see we had put forth effort to learn about our job and about their pets. But I simply don't want the effort forced into my life. So I woke up at 4 am and drafted an idea that might seem a bit more palatable to most groomers and exciting to some. Please consider my thoughts and let's work together to improve the grooming careers of many workers.

I believe that most people want to learn, and want to achieve certification to feel they are capable and prepared. Let's help them reach their goals. Don't "clean us up", help us up!

*Sincerely,
Teresa Hewitt
Bubbles and Bones Grooming*

Voluntary Groomer Certification Program

1. How to obtain your voluntary certification:

- A.) Test out of the training program:
 - 1.) Groom one dog from each breed group
 - 2.) Show proof of a minimum of one year consecutive grooming experience.
 - 3.) Pass written portion of test displaying knowledge of grooming procedures, dog handling skills and breed conformation.
- OR
- B.) Attend Pet Grooming Training:
 - 1.) Complete dog grooming classes at the community college level and apprenticeship program.
 - 2.) Complete dog training school taught by a certified groomer.
 - 3.) On-the-job training via one year internship under a Certified Groomer.

2. Value of Grooming Certificate to student:

- A.) Student gains valuable experience in grooming field via work performed. They will leave the certificate training program with a minimum of two months / 40 dogs grooming experience.
- B.) Enters the work force with a better knowledge of equipment, grooming forums, insurance and retirement options via exposure to other certified groomers.
- C.) Student is given the opportunity to learn about different grooming aspects such

as obtaining a Master Groomers Certificate, grooming competitions, blade servicing, retail marketing and customer service.

D.) Certified groomers will be eligible for voluntary inclusion in the insurance and retirement programs.

3. Value of Grooming Program to local community:

- A.) Grooming program creates a more highly cross trained groomer.
- B.) Grooming certificate classes bring a more skilled laborer to the work force. Skilled labor can increase pay which increases expendable income for use with local businesses.
- C.) Certificate program supports usage of local community colleges adding to local economy.
- D.) Certificate program requires certified teachers thus supporting retired groomers and the grooming community. This would enhance expendable income in the community.
- E.) Most importantly it would come to be expected and looked for by the pet owning public. Simply becoming the standard, below which is unacceptable.
- F.) Certified groomers will have the option for the retirement program offered and will thus not depend as heavily on

Continued on page 50

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Letters to the Editor
Continued from page 49

Social Security and Medicare during retirement.

G.) Retired groomers can still function as trainers, testers and program administrators and thus not require unemployment compensation.

4. Value of grooming certification to the grooming industry:

A.) Certification program will enhance confidence in the training and skill levels of individual groomers.

B.) Aids in creating customer confidence in the groomer and in the grooming industry as a whole.

C.) Aids grooming establishments in locating and selecting grooming staff, as well as other shop staff. (Boarding, retail sales and reception.) Not only can you let "Are you certified" be your question, but shops can recruit graduates from the certificate programs. Thus offering graduates an assured job upon completion of the course.

D.) Certification program would offer retired groomers an opportunity to remain in the field and still earn a living even after health issues have arisen, via teaching, supervising testing or even working in the

groomer's insurance and retirement sector.

E.) If offered in local community colleges and such, the certificate program would be more readily obtained by persons desiring work in the grooming field.

F.) Completion of the program would also help encourage involvement in grooming seminars, grooming contests and perhaps the Master Groomer Certification program.

G.) Manufacturers would be able to advertise and promote their products and services to students during the course of their training.

a. Manufacturers could donate equipment to the community colleges to be used during training. (I started my training in 1995 with an Oster clipper and Andre Tesserand shears, I still use and buy those brands.)

b. Manufacturers and service industries can either visit the facility or be toured via field trips to their facilities. This would be a learning opportunity for the students as well as an advertising opportunity for the manufacturers.

H.) Most importantly by creating a large group of certified groomers, grooming instructors, certification test administrators, program administration personnel and grooming industry service persons, we have created a large pool of persons to use to create a group insurance and retirement base. This large group would allow the administrators of the certification program to seek out and obtain lower, more affordable insurance for everyone involved.

I.) The availability of affordable insurance and a retirement program would encourage more experienced groomers to remain in the grooming industry. This would improve the end product for the customer.

5. Where do we get started?

A.) We can start the process by setting up voluntary certification boards in regional areas. We can create a pool of teachers and test administrators by offering certification to experienced groomers. Later use newly certified groomers as test administrators for more localized areas. (Existing grooming judges or master groomers could be used to officiate testing until certified/trained testers could take over.)

B.) We can propose certification classes to the local colleges using experienced groomers who have earned their certification, as teachers.

C.) We can promote pet grooming as a viable career option to high school and technical school students.

D.) We could also consider promoting Bather/Brusher Certification and trades such as clipper blade sharpening, clipper and dryer repair and servicing training.

6. Value of grooming certification to existing groomers:

A.) Certification will increase the customer's perception of value for the services received. (Impress the customer)

B.) Give the groomer a greater level of

Continued on next page

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REQUEST READER SERVICE #5021

Letters to the Editor

Continued from page 50

confidence. (Because they have proved to themselves that they are capable and knowledgeable in their field.)

C.) Make the certificate holder eligible for inclusion in the voluntary group insurance and retirement program. (The future being our main goal in all of this.)

D.) Grooming certification could be made a prerequisite for participating in Master Groomer Competitions. (Awareness and participation of the Master Groomer Certification would be increased via the certification program.)

E.) Certification would encourage groomers to become more active in continuing education seminars and other grooming functions.

F.) Grooming shops would be able to offer inclusion in the voluntary insurance and retirement programs as a benefit to their groomers.

Grooming Certification Program Plan

1. One year program

A.) Semester one: (fall semester:

graded on test scores and grooming ability)
a. Meets two to three nights per week for three hours each night

b. Practice grooming on fake grooming dogs purchased from the student book store at the college.

c. Complete weekly written tests regarding: (purchase grooming manual and breed book from student store)

1. Specific breed conformation and characteristics (sporting, non-sporting, herding, designer mutts, etc)

2. Grooming techniques (uses of shampoos and conditioners plus hot oils and nail filing)

3. Equipment maintenance (clipper maintenance, dryer maintenance, cage cleaning, shop sanitation)

4. Customer service skills (dealing with unhappy customers, creating satisfied customers, interpersonal skills)

B.) Semester two: (spring semester: graded on test scores and grooming ability)

a. Meets two to three nights per week for three hours each night

b. Practice grooming on fake grooming dogs purchased from the student book store at the college.

c. Complete weekly written tests regarding: (purchase grooming manual and breed book from student book store)

1. Specific breed conformation and characteristics. (Toys, Terriers, designer mutts and Poodles)

2. Grooming techniques (use of alternate blades for similar cuts, scissoring skills, use of clip-on combs)

3. Shop management skills (payment of taxes, utilities, acquiring insurance, licenses and scheduling, payroll issues)

4. Retail management skills (purchasing retail items, retail marketing techniques, advertising skills)

C.) Summer internship: (320 hours total)

a. Intern works two months at 40 hours per week in assigned grooming facility.

b. Must groom the minimum equivalent of one dog per day of work. (One dog per day x average of 20 work days per month x two months = 40 dogs groomed)

c. Intern should work in all sectors of the shop to include:

1. Customer service (retail area for skills in salesmanship, satisfying the customer and product knowledge)

2. Bathing (bath, brush, nails, ears and dry)

3. Boarding (if available for skills in handling, cleaning and feeding)

4. Reception (phone or front desk for skills in scheduling, dealing with clients and their pets)

Sincerely,

Teresa Hewitt

Bubbles and Bones Grooming

Proverbial Wisdom

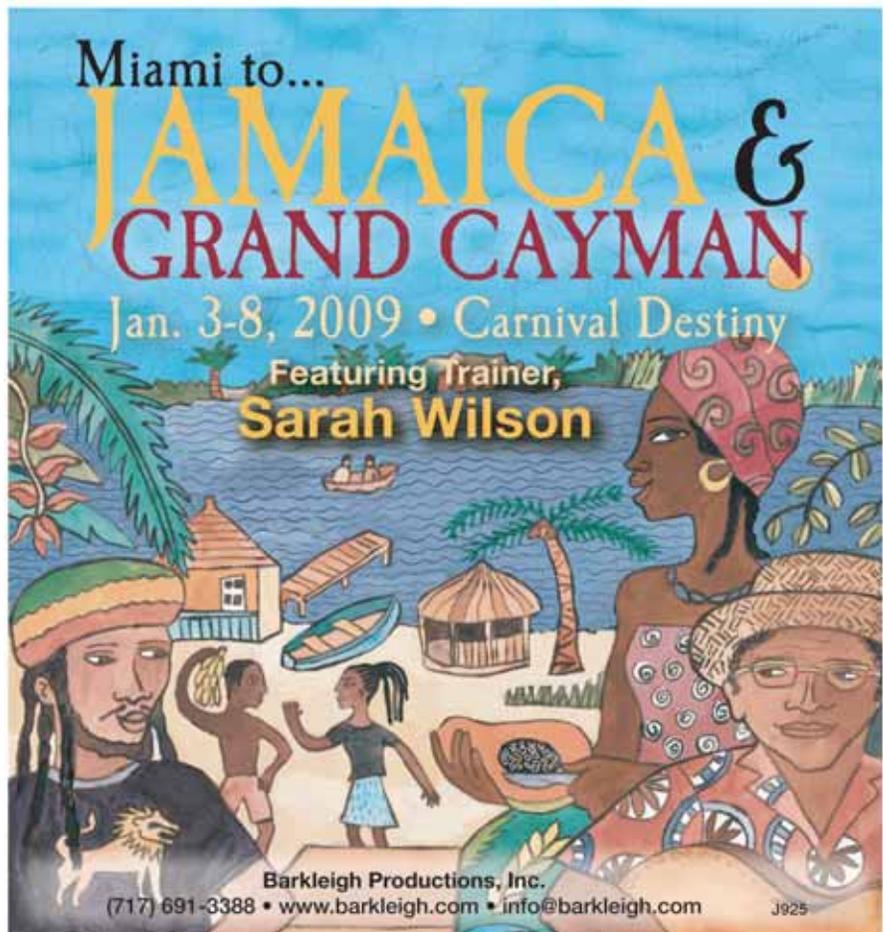
Friendly suggestions are as pleasant as perfume.

Proverbs 27:9 Living Bible

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New Product News



RAW FROZEN DIETS



Nature's Logic Raw Frozen Diets remove the water from the vegetables and fruits before adding them to the animal ingredients. This results in a very potent and nutrient dense super food concentrate from the fresh fruits and vegetables used. A secondary benefit to the consumer by removing the water from the fresh fruits and vegetables is an end product offering more food for the money. Even though Nature's Logic guarantees a maximum moisture level of 68%, the diets have analyzed as low as 55% moisture. This means more calories, nutrients and food per pound of product. For more information, Request Reader Service Card #4882.

GREENEST GROOMING SALON



Odyssey introduces the Odyssey GGS, "Greenest Grooming Salon" using two inverters, an ample battery system and harnessing

the power of the sun through roof mounted solar panels to assist in charging the batteries. Just think, no generator, no running the vehicle's engine, no Propane, no fumes, no noise and just about maintenance free. You get 6,000 watts of pure grooming power with plenty of reserve for a full days grooming. Odyssey also offers a "True Hybrid Grooming Salon". Being a true hybrid the generator only starts when you exceed the 5,000 watts of inverter power keeping the noise, fuel consumption and maintenance much lower than other models. Request Reader Service Card #4886.

'5 IN 1' CHAMPION BLADE

Wahl North America Animal Division introduces the latest addition to its Professional Blade product line, the '5 in 1' Champion Blade, manufactured with a high density heat treatment technology. The cutting performance of the '5 in 1' blade system features five (#9, 10, 15, 30 & 40) adjustable cut lengths that are integrated into the quick-change cutting system. The '5 in 1' Champion Blade, is a replacement blade used on the Wahl Arco SE, Chromado and Bravura Clippers that combine unbeatable cordless performance and higher efficiency. The New '5 in 1' Champion Blade features a Physical Vapour Deposition (PVD) coating. Request Reader Service Card #4887.



AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO FELINE CANNED FOOD



Nature's Logic Feline Canned Diets are a great way to treat your cat to a special meal. They are highly palatable and nutrient dense muscle meat and organ meat-based canned

foods with concentrates of select fruits and vegetables. They contain no wheat, corn, rice, soy, potato or chemically synthesized vitamins, minerals, or trace nutrients. Each canned diet contains a unique source of highly digestible natural eggshell calcium and animal plasma containing high levels of natural vitamins, minerals, albumin and globulin proteins. The feline canned diets are available in chicken, duck with salmon, and rabbit. For more information, request Reader Service Card #4892.

DOGGY+SAFE



The Doggy+Safe, created by Cies Enterprise LLC, is a trash can designed to prevent dogs from getting into its contents, features a locking lid and anti-tip device. Cies Enterprises LLC recently put its latest design to the ultimate test at the Colorado Wolf and Wildlife Center. Doggy-Safe's new Dog Proof Model DS3 trashcan was baited with three pounds of fresh ground beef and then placed with the wolf sanctuary to see if wolves could foil the can's unique anti-tip, lid-locking design. One wolf continuously attacked the lid, latch, and can from every angle for nearly 15 minutes, then he gave up. For more information, Request Reader Service Card #4942.

DAVIS SUNSCREEN SHAMPOO

Frequent sun exposure can make pet hair dull and brittle just as it does with human hair. Davis Sunscreen Shampoo shields hair from the harsh sun, helping to maintain its natural health, shine and color. Made specifically for hair, the



Industry News

2008 ALL AMERICA GROOMING SHOW

Mark your calendars for the 36th All American Grooming Show, August 14-17, 2008, at the new location, the *Westin Chicago North Shore*, in Wheeling, Illinois. Jay Scruggs and Sue Zecco will present a new all-day program titled *CANINE GROOMING SECRETS*. This program will be for competitors and attendees to bring back to their customers more stylish trims, secrets, and techniques.

Also on board is Teri DiMarino for a new all-day program titled *READY-SET-GO! PREP-BATHE-DRY!* A good bathing and drying job is 50% of a great groom and a 100% of many. The bathing room has been the starting point of every successful stylist and the active salon needs to pay more attention to this important position. With an emphasis on safety and efficiency, Teri guides this fun and informative all-day seminar through an average day in a busy salon. *For more information, Request Reader Service Card #4885.*

CHRISTIAN MANELOPOULOS WINS SHOW DOG GROOMER OF YEAR AWARD

Christian Manelopoulos has received the 2007 Cardinal Crystal Show Dog Groomer of the Year award. The award was presented to Manelopoulos at the 53rd Annual Show Dogs of the Year Awards, during the Westminster Dog Show. Spon-



sored by pet product manufacturer *Cardinal Laboratories*, the award was established to recognize grooming excellence and professionalism within the Show Dog Community.

A Greensboro, North Carolina-based groomer, handler and breeder, Manelopoulos specializes in Poodles. He is the groomer and handler of *Remy*, a Standard Poodle who has won 59 *Best in Shows*, and two consecutive *Best in Groups* at Westminster, including this year's show. Remy and his human team also won the title of *Non-Sporting Show Dog of the Year* at this year's *Show Dogs of the Year Awards*. Originally from Australia, Manelopoulos is not only very talented, but also very productive, grooming 30 Poodles at the 2007 PCA Specialty.

For more information on the Cardinal Crystal Show Dog Groomer of the Year award, Request Reader Service Card #4888.

CENTRAL VIRGINIA GROOMING CLINIC

After far too many years, Virginia has its own educational venue for groomers! *Apple Grove Academy of Grooming* hosted their first *Central Virginia Grooming Clinic* with contests, educational seminars and mini trade show recently, drawing over 100 attendees and 18 competitors.

The main seminar, *Dermatology 101* was presented by Dr. Lynn Schmeitzel of *Animal Allergy and Dermatology* from Richmond VA. Dr. Penny Dudley of Fredericksburg, specializing in sports chiropractic medicine, taught proper alignment specifically for groomers. Bow-making and basic grooming techniques rounded out the day's educational opportunities. *For more information, request Reader Service Card #4883.*

ITSMYLIFE.COM

ItsMyLife.com is the only online estate planning service that enables a pet owner to legally name a caregiver and include instructions for taking care of their dog. *ItsMyLife.com* makes it easy with special features that guide them through each step: simple-to-follow templates ensure the legal paperwork is complete, tips for choosing the best caregiver and easy-to-use formulas for calculating how much it will cost to take care of *Fido* after they're gone. Remember, if they make no arrangements for their dog's care, they risk their pet ending up homeless or in an animal shelter. *Request Reader Service Card #4893.*

patented technology activates sun protection properties after shampooing and rinsing, which means *Davis Sunscreen Shampoo* continues working long after the pet is bathed. And while conditioners merely mask the effects of sun damage, this product actually prevents rough hair surfaces, color fading and breakage. *Request Reader Service Card #4944.*

PETEDGE GINGHAM

PetEdge has all the items retailers need to capitalize on gingham's popularity and boost their springtime sales. With three bright and lively colors to choose from, *PetEdge* gingham is sure to attract style-conscious dog owners—all of the following items are available in Parrot Green, Magenta, and Bluebird. Retailers can create colorful, mix-and-match displays or order *PetEdge's* exclusive, fully-stocked, 99-piece gingham End-cap. There's everything from dresses to



booties, in every size to fit every dog, plus caps to shield stylish pets from hot sunshine. Coordinating accessories are also available, from jaunty bandanas to canisters of cute gingham bows and barrettes. *Request Reader Service Card #4946.*

DURAPET PREMIUM SLOW-FEED BOWL

OurPet's, a company with holistic, integrated pet care items and consumables, has come up with a better, more sanitary solu-

tion to placing a block in the bowl – the *Durapet Premium Slow-Feed Bowl*. Made from the same high-quality, heavy-duty stainless steel as the original *Durapet Premium* pet bowls, the *Slow-Feed Bowl* has a unique, raised center area that mimics a ball or cube, reducing the surface area of the food and forcing the dog to eat slower, which decreases the chance of bloat and other gastric disturbances that can result from a dog eating too quickly. Eating slower also aids in food absorption. *Request Reader Service Card #4947.*



Sally's Desk
Continued from page 5

new adventure. Yes, it would be long. Two days on the *Empire Builder*... an historic train route that runs from Chicago to Seattle near the Canadian border. Three and one half days total on trains. North Dakota and the big sky country of Montana were of particular interest to me. Those were the two states that I have not visited of all of the 50 states.

I pulled up travelogues about the sightseer and dining cars on the *Empire Builder*. And how it goes through three national parks on its trek. Park Rangers even board the train at various points to update the travelers. You can watch the passing scenery from a double deck viewing car.

"They even wash the train three times on the way," I said to Gwen.

I remember one blog that told how the whole sightseer car full of Japanese and American tourists hushed as the golden beams of a sunset filled the space as the train traversed the mountains of *Glacier National Park*. Yes, *Glacier National Park*.

"It will be wonderful," I exclaimed to Gwen. "Can you imagine!!!!" I was mentally already on board. Even the train stations sounded fun as they encouraged travelers to get off and ad-

mire the scenic and historic stations of the west.

Now accommodations were in order. Lucy told me they had an accessible cabin with an upper and lower berth and a restroom. I needed the accessible room since I travel with an electric scooter due to bad knees. During the day, the beds became lounging chairs for Gwen and I. The cabin, though small, was 6-1/2' by 9-1/2'. It was doable for just three days. A handicapped shower was just down the hallway on the *Empire Builder*.

Gwen called and cancelled her flight to Washington.

The day arrived. We shipped a lot of our stuff to Washington so we would be carrying minimal luggage. Minimal to me was two small suitcases. Minimal to Gwen was four! At 2:30 pm, we boarded the train at the beautiful restored Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Train Station. We had a coach seat on this one to Pittsburgh, but once there we would enjoy a leisurely dinner at one of the fine restaurants in the historic *Pittsburgh Train Station* while awaiting our sleeper to Chicago. That is the refined thing to do for rail travelers desiring an opportunity to enjoy the ambiance of train travel. I had read this in the blogs.

After two hours on the coach to Pittsburgh, I was beginning to weary of the trip. Even though we followed along the beautiful Susquehanna River, I was seeing a lot of ugly backyards, junk yards, and soot. The train was really dirty. The bathroom was ick! I was beginning to second

guess myself on this initial six hour trip. At 8:30 pm, we pulled into Pittsburgh. Where was the beautiful train station? What was this white tiled hole in the wall underneath rotting cement, that looked like an old bus station. Vending machines were the obvious dining of choice.

A look around at other haggard, unkempt train travelers and I soon began to feel like them. I had made a terrible mistake. I was tired, depressed, cranky, hungry and disillusioned. I wanted to leave and never come back. We had a six hour layover in this place after a six hour trip. And we were only 200 miles from home. What would the remaining 2500 miles bring?

By midnight I was exhausted. Sitting around at this dirty station for a train that was going to be two hours late was the last straw. I called home. My husband answered.

"I made a terrible mistake," I cried. "I am coming home."

Tom was sympathetic. He was afraid this would happen but secretly hoped it would be a good experience as he has always wanted to do this kind of trip through the *Canadian Rockies*. Now, his hopes were dashed. Thankfully, he didn't say I told you so.

I told him I would get a hotel tonight and a train home the next day.

"I can't do this, Gwen," I moaned.

Continued on next page

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Sally's Desk
Continued from page 54

"If we get something to eat, it might seem better," said Gwen. She ordered Chinese take-out to be delivered to the train station. Meanwhile, I went back to the agent for the refund. He was busy and I left the tickets with him.

Gwen called the airline to book a ticket for herself to Washington.

After eating, things did look a little better.

"Perhaps, we can continue. Maybe this was the worst of it. The Pullman sleeper might be better than this, and if not, tomorrow morning we can fly back from Chicago," I said. "Can you go see if you can get our tickets back?" I questioned Gwen. Fortunately, he had not started to process them.

Finally at 2:30 am., our train rolled into the station and they loaded us into the handicapped cabin.

"Oh, my gosh," I said to Gwen. The room was tiny. 6-1/2 x 9-1/2 feet? No way. The 6-1/2 feet was only at the bed, and it was only 24" wide. The majority of the room was just 4' wide. With my cart, luggage, and Gwen there was no room. Fortunately, we bought a roomette for Gwen in Pittsburgh or it would have been a catastrophe.

"I can't do this," I said crying to Gwen. "Let's get a flight out of Chicago tomorrow. I am going back home." Gwen called and made airline reservations for us.

After Gwen left, I sat on the bunk. My eyes scanned the little metal room. It was filthy. Picture this. Take a closet in your house. Punch out a window. Lay down a diving board across two chairs to make a bed. Cover it with an ironing board cover. Throw in a "honey pot" in the corner with the "wrong view" out the window... and you have my cabin.

Now... rock that room back and forth, screech the wheels, put a nasty horn on it, and a disinterested cabin attendant and you have a sleeper! If we were on a plane, people would have been holding onto each other and praying as the "turbulence" was so violent. I could hardly undress and climb into the supposed safety of the bed. I held on for dear life all night long and many was the time I almost rolled out. By morning I was exhausted.

I dressed and packed up by 8:30 a.m. and Gwen came in. I don't know what was wrong with me, but I surprised Gwen. "Why don't we just continue," I said wearily. "At least we are half way there and it is the best part of the trip with the scenery and all." I really hate to be a quitter. Everyone said I couldn't do it. I hated to prove them right.

Gwen called the airline and cancelled our reservations before we got off the train.

So, we got out at the Chicago station and waited hours for our next train. The pretty train. The clean train. The sightseer train. The great and mighty, legendary *Empire Builder!* Trains don't stay long in a station, and we were rushed onto our new conveyance. At least the shock of a sleeper was over. Or I thought so. This one was even dirtier than the last. And older.

Hour after interminable hour we watched out the window. Illinois. Wisconsin, Minnesota. Back yards. Junk yards. Time to sleep. Toss and turn. Rock and roll. Hold onto the bed for dear life. Try to get to the "honey pot" when the train pulls into a station... but remember to pull the curtains or someone is not going to like the view. Go back to bed. And do it all over again. It was a never ending nightmare and I couldn't escape my prison.

I was looking forward to a shower. "Give that idea up," said Gwen. It was too small and I



could barely stand up. This would mean four days without a shower by the time we reached Washington. I have never gone "shower less" for that many days. How many indignities would I have to suffer on this train?

"I will never take a train again," I said to Gwen. "We are flying back to Pennsylvania." And Gwen called Southwest and made airline reservations.

North Dakota. North Dakota. North Dakota. North Dakota. Clackety Clack. Finally Montana. Dry high desert plains. Nothing to look at but plains, plains and more plains... and not even one buffalo roaming. We were scheduled to arrive at the edge of Glacier National Park at about 6:30 pm. Wrong. We arrived two hours late at deep dusk. We saw one mountain and that was it.

Inky darkness. Rock and roll. Time to sleep. Toss and turn. Hold onto the bed for dear life. Try to get to the "honey pot" when the train pulls into a station... but remember to pull the curtains or someone is not going to like the view. Go back to bed. And do it all over again.

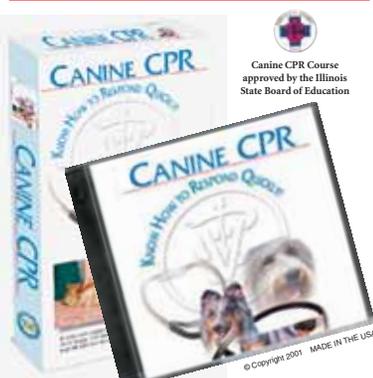
We arrived near Portland, Oregon in the morning having gone by all the great scenery during the night. We changed trains for the two hour trip north to Tacoma and arrived mid-day. Staff waited for us at the station. What a welcome site. End of the line. We checked into the beautiful *Silver Cloud Inn* and I got a shower and a proper dinner. Life was better.

I had survived the *Empire Builder*. I now know what 3000 miles of America looks like by rail. Crazy I may have been but I said to Gwen, "Do you want to go back by train? At least we would see Glacier National Park and Mt. Rainier during the day. Why don't you cancel the airline reservations!"

"No," Gwen said emphatically. NO. And that was that!

Sally

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Pacific Northwest Grooming Show Review

Continued from page 12

Dogs by Joan Hoskin.

Saturday afternoon also kicked off the show's grooming competitions. *PetEdge* sponsored the *Super Model Dog Contest*. The competition was split into two categories, *Nature's Specialties Poodle Class* on Saturday and *Andis Pup-ouri Class* (all other purebreds) on Sunday. The competition judges were IJA members: Tim Prior, Teri DiMarino and Marea Tully.

At the completion of the *Super Model Dog Competition* on Sunday, *PetEdge* awarded prize money for *Best In Show* and *Best First Timer*. The *Best in Show* winner, Lauren Snyder of *PetSmart* in Olympia, WA, was awarded \$1000. Lauren Snyder also won *Best First Timer*, bringing home an additional \$250 in prize money.

Nature's Specialties Poodle Class - Model Dog awarded Linda Sonn \$400 for 1st Place, 2nd Place winner Carol Hoover took home \$200 and Anne Hastings was awarded \$100 for 3rd place.

ANDIS awarded prize money for the *Pup-ouri Class*. Lauren Snyder won 1st place and was awarded \$400, 2nd place winner, Tami Vornbrock took home \$200 and Katrina Hepler Petr was awarded \$100 for 3rd place.

Sunday also included many additional educational classes. The morning offered the *Clicker Training Workshop* by Gary Wilkes. The rest of the day was packed full with classes: *Breed Profiles Made Easy* by Tim Prior, *Grooming The Geriatric Pet* by Teri DiMarino, *Great Grooming On Drop Coated Breeds* by Jay Scruggs and sponsored by WAHL, *Time Saving Tips* by Pam Julian, *Mixed Breed Magic* by Jay Scruggs and sponsored by WAHL, *Web Building For Dummies* by Pam Julian, *Cat Grooming Made Easy* by Marea Tully and *Retail Magic...Merchandising And Selling In Your Pet Care Facility* by Teri DiMarino.

For information on next year's Pacific Northwest Grooming Show or any other Barkleigh event, visit www.Barkleigh.com or call Barkleigh Productions, Inc. 970 W. Trindle Rd. Mechanicsburg, PA. (717) 691-3388.



(Left to Right) *Natures Specialties'* Mary Meeks with winner of Poodle Class, Linda Sonn



(Left to Right) *Andis Representative, Pete Carroll, and International Grooming Consultant, Marea Tully*

Photo Courtesy of Sue's Pet Photography
pets2you@sbcglobal.net

Photo Courtesy of Sue's Pet Photography
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The Atlanta Pet Fair

Pet care professionals recently made their annual pilgrimage to Atlanta. The 20th Anniversary show will always be remembered as the year it "snowed" in Atlanta. Attendees peered out the conference center glass windows in amazement as the snow came down Saturday morning. An impromptu *Creative Fun Match* proved to be "fun" for all. Competitors were given a 6" stuffed toy dog and only 30 minutes to prepare their entry in the ring. There were no rules, just the criteria of "creative." The *Super Model Dog Competition* was offered in Atlanta.

GroomTeam sanctioned classes culminated into the *Best In Show Awards* Saturday evening. Irina Pinkusevich was chosen as having groomed the *Best Dog In Show* with her *Potpourri* entry, and Lindsey Berry won *Best All Around Stylist* by earning the most points. The show offered a total of 73 lectures, most of which were "standing room only." Photos of the show can be found at their web site: www.atlantapetfair.com. Next year's dates are March 5-8, 2009. For more information, Request Reader Service Card #4943.



Best In Show: Marea Tully (Andis Co. - Sponsor), Irina Pinkusevich, Annette Quick (Judge), Ann Stafford (Show Producer)

Atlanta Pet Fair Results

BEST IN SHOW
Irina Pinkusevich

BEST ALL AROUND STYLIST
Lindsey Berry

BEST 1ST TIME COMPETITOR
Carolee Brancefield

TERRIER BREEDS
Entry Division
Maria Sherman, Christina Millikin, Julie Rust
Intermediate Division
Jeri Hoppe, Wendy Delrie, Brenda Gallops
Open Division
Jared Lane, Cheryl Purcell, Debbie Slocum,
Group Level
Jared Lane, Cheryl Purcell, Jeri Hoppe
1st Time Competitor
Christina Millikin

POTPOURRI BREEDS
Entry Division
Michelle Hirsch, Trudy Vanarsdale
Intermediate Division
Brandi Gamblin, Jessica Rudden,
Rita Dadosky
Open Division
Irina Pinkusevich, Veronica Frosch,
Olga Zabelinskaya
Group Level
Irina Pinkusevich, Brandi Gamblin, Veronica
Frosch
1st Time Competitor
Carolee Brancefield

SPORTING BREEDS
Entry Division
Heather Shultz, Hillary Rogers
Intermediate Division
Sandra Phillips, Yvonne Aitken,
Marilyn Wainwright
Open Division
Koko Tanaka, Lindsey Berry, Greta Dalrymple
Group Level
Koko Tanaka, Lindsey Berry, Greta Dalrymple

NON-SPORTING SMALL BREEDS
Entry Division
Heather Oliphant, Heather Shultz, Julie Rust
Intermediate Division
Shannon Moore, Christy Nelson,
Angelia Browning
Open Division
Jonathan Dalzell, Irina Pinkusevich,
Lindsey Berry
Group Level
Jonathan Dalzell, Irina Pinkusevich,
Lindsey Berry
1st Time Competitor
Christina Millikin

NON SPORTING LARGE BREEDS
Entry Division
Bridget Graff, Heather Shultz, Teresa Frank
Intermediate Division
Angelia Browning, Adriane Pope,
Shannon Moore
Open Division
Lindsey Berry, Veronica Frosch, Kimberly West
Group Level
Lindsey Berry, Veronica Frosch, Kimberly West
1st Time Competitor
Teresa Frank

SCARLET'S CHALLENGE
Brenda Gallops, Shannon Moore, Wendy Delrie

CREATIVE STYLING
Angela Kumpe, Adriane Pope, Lori Craig

SUPER MODEL DOG
Veronica Frosch, Olga Zabelinskaya,
Kimberly West

CREATIVE FUN MATCH
Connie Bryant, LeAnn Powell, Angela Kumpe

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2008-2009 Calendar of Events



SHOW DATES AT A GLANCE

2008

July 10 – 13, 2008

PetQuest
Pet Boutique & Spa Expo
Animal Behavior Conf.
Ft. Mitchell, KY
(Cincinnati, OH Area)

September 11 – 14, 2008

Groom Expo
Animal Behavior Conf.
Hershey, PA

2009

January 3 – 8, 2009

Cruise to Jamaica & Grand Cayman
Carnival Destiny
Miami to Jamaica

New Location!

February 12 – 15, 2009
Groom and Kennel Expo
Pet Boutique & Spa Expo
Pasadena, CA

September 17 – 20, 2009

Groom Expo
Animal Behavior Conf.
Hershey, PA

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www.nationaldoggroomers.com

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Illinois

All American Grooming Show

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10/3/2008 – 10/5/2008
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hhbacker@hhbacker.com

Kentucky

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www.barkleigh.com

Pet Boutique & Spa Show

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Ft Mitchell KY
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www.barkleigh.com

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Nevada

SuperZoo

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Las Vegas NV
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Animal Behavior Conference

9/11/2008 – 9/14/2008
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www.groomexpo.com

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lindacc@nepgp.com • www.nepgp.com

South Carolina

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6/5/2008 – 6/8/2008
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HOME PHONE CELL PHONE WORK-ARR WORK-ARRS EMAIL

REFERRED BY BREED SIZE

NAME COLOR BIRTHDATE

VET PHONE

VACINATIONS MEDICAL PROBLEMS

CLIP: EASY FUR DIFFICULT BITEY CHECK EARS CHECK ANKLS

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

ALL THAT APPLY: JAW JAWBROCK JAWBITE JAWBITE SOLER JAWBITE JAWBITE ANKLS JAWBITE EARS JAWBITE EYES JAWBITE JAWBITE JAWBITE JAWBITE

SIZE CHART: HT, WT, NECK, BACK, CHEST, GIRTH

DOG CLIP DIAGRAM

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DATE SERVICES, PRODUCTS, ETC. CHARGES REMINDER DATE

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CELL PHONE WORK-ARR WORK-ARRS EMAIL

REFERRED BY BREED SIZE

NAME COLOR BIRTHDATE

VET PHONE

VACINATIONS MEDICAL PROBLEMS

CLIP: EASY FUR DIFFICULT BITEY CHECK EARS CHECK ANKLS

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

ALL THAT APPLY: JAW JAWBROCK JAWBITE JAWBITE SOLER JAWBITE JAWBITE ANKLS JAWBITE EARS JAWBITE EYES JAWBITE JAWBITE JAWBITE JAWBITE

SIZE CHART: HT, WT, NECK, BACK, CHEST, GIRTH

DOG CLIP DIAGRAM

Medium Klip Kard

This 4"x 6" card offers space for pet description and medical problems, referral, birth date, vet phone and clip description. Popular Pet Profile checklist denotes a number of conditions about a pet. Back has columns for date, services, charges and reminder date.

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Available Colors



APPT. DATE CHARGES ETC. REMINDER DATE

LAST FIRST HOME PHONE

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REFERRED BY BREED SIZE

NAME COLOR BIRTHDATE

VET PHONE

VACINATIONS MEDICAL PROBLEMS

CLIP: EASY FUR DIFFICULT BITEY CHECK EARS CHECK ANKLS

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

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SIZE CHART: HT, WT, NECK, BACK, CHEST, GIRTH

DOG CLIP DIAGRAM

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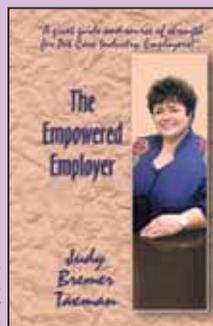
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Best Prices... Best Brands...



Paw Brothers® Professional Modular Cage System

This system includes everything needed (pans, grates and cage connectors) to build a kennel area unique to your space and needs. Specially engineered and designed for safety, strength, durability and longevity. Bank configurations are unlimited.



BANK OF CAGES
\$1,877.98



Bank Includes: 5 Small Cages, 4 Medium Cages, 2 Large Cages, Pans, Grates and Connectors.
(Add Mobility And Versatility With A Frame And Large Cage Dividers)



- ✓ Heavy-Duty 20 gauge steel zinc plated steel
- ✓ Electrostatically powder coated exterior and interior
- ✓ Hammertone finish, off white color that matches any décor and does not show dirt
- ✓ Coordinates with Paw Brothers Professional Electric table and Tub
- ✓ Removable doors for easy cleaning
- ✓ True one-handed latch operation
- ✓ Safety engineered wire spacing by latches to prevent animal's paws from getting stuck or manipulating door latch
- ✓ Floor grates feature 1/2 x 4" safety spacing
- ✓ Floor grates are safe and strong. Keeps pets safely above waste pan and prevents paws from pushing through or getting stuck
- ✓ ABS plastic waste pans
- ✓ All cages are knock down and must be assembled giving a tremendous freight savings.
- ✓ All Inclusive: Hardware, pans and floor grates
- ✓ Creates a clean, sleek, professional image

Modular Cage -

Includes Pans, Grates & Cage Connectors

PBP89400	Small Modular Cage 17.5 x 19.5 x 22"	\$137.26
PBP89410	Medium Modular Cage 21.75 x 29.5 x 26"	166.21
PBP89420	Large Modular Cage 43.5 x 31.5 x 26"	263.42

Accessories

PBP89450	ABS Plastic Waste Pan for PBP89400	\$11.76
PBP89451	Floor Grill for PBP89400	24.71
PBP89454	ABS Plastic Waste Pan for PBP89410	15.71
PBP89455	Floor Grill for PBP89410	24.71
PBP89458	ABS Plastic Waste Pan (Set of 2) for PBP89420	35.96
PBP89459	Floor Grill (Set of 2) for PBP89420	71.96
PBP89460	Cage Divider for PBP89420	40.46
PBP89478	Cage Connectors (Pack of 20)	13.95
PBP89480	Full Frame, With 6 Wheels.	119.96
PBP89481	1/2 Frame, With 4 Wheels.	89.21

www.RyansPet.com

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